

MODERN LANGUAGE QUARTERLY

September, 1958

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TRAGIC ASPECTS OF THE ARTIST IN THOMAS MANN'S WORK

By W. H. REY¹

"Nicht von euch ist die Rede, gar niemals . . . sondern von mir, von mir. . ." Thomas Mann made this statement as early as 1906 with particular reference to his first great novel, *Buddenbrooks*.² There is hardly any doubt, however, that it can be applied to his whole work. Indeed, it is Thomas Mann who looks at us in ever-changing masks when we read his books. We find him in Tonio Kröger and in Aschenbach, in Felix Krull and in Adrian Leverkühn, in Hans Castorp and in Joseph. But to find *him* means to find the artist, and the artist in his turn is the man of genius, highest representative of humanity. Thomas Mann's statement, therefore, could very well be reversed: whenever our author talks about himself, he talks about us. It is this interest in man, the deep concern about his destiny, the fascination with his inscrutable mystery, which inspired the writings of Thomas Mann. The author fulfilled the promise of his hero, Tonio Kröger: to create tragic and laughable figures and some "die beides zugleich sind."³

"Beides zugleich"—this formula describes Thomas Mann's dual perspective. It points to his unique gift of seeing two or more aspects of a problem, a figure, a symbol, which enabled him to unfold in his works a rich world of dialectic opposites, of ironic polarities. Those who have read *The Magic Mountain* will certainly remember the endless and yet fascinating philosophical duel between Settembrini and Naphta which ends in utter confusion since each of the opponents finds himself using the other's arguments. Here we have an outstanding example of Thomas Mann's intellectual humor, of his ironic temper which aroused so much admiration and, at the same time, so much criticism, especially among his German interpreters.

Indeed, Thomas Mann, standing at the end of a cultural period, is a master of ambiguity, irony, parody, and self-parody. However, what might seem to be nothing but irresponsible artistic playfulness is in reality the expression of very serious personal convictions. First of all, Thomas Mann believes (with young Nietzsche) that the human mind cannot penetrate the confusion of life and the mystery of exist-

¹ This article was read as a paper before the German Section of the Ninth Annual Northwest Conference of Foreign Language Teachers (April 10-12, 1958) at the University of Oregon.

² *Bilse und ich*, in *Altes und Neues* (1953), p. 31.

³ *Tonio Kröger*, in *Novellen* (1925), II, 88.

ence. Therefore, any claim to possess the absolute, final truth amounts in his opinion to a philistine prejudice. The renunciation of the conventional concept of truth for the love of truth appears to him not as a frivolous relativism but as the highest achievement of intellectual morality, a morality which is superior to any dogmatism and fanaticism. Secondly, Thomas Mann's concept of the artist as the mediator between the sensual and the spiritual (which reminds us of Schiller's aesthetics) is based on artistic irony. In contrast to the theologian and the philosopher, who are bound to identify themselves with certain creeds and ideas, the artist can fulfill his function only by keeping himself free from one-sided commitments. For irony is for Thomas Mann always irony toward both sides; it does not know a definite yes or a definite no, but prefers to say yes and no at the same time. It is "das Pathos der Mitte."⁴

Artistic irony (which means, at the same time, artistic objectivity) appears as a necessary precondition for the cosmic mission of the artist to represent the integrated totality of human existence. Thomas Mann visualizes him as the center of the world, as lord of the dialectic counterpositions, as the mediator between the opposites of life and death, life and art, reason and instinct, time and eternity. We refer here in particular to the famous chapter "Snow" in *The Magic Mountain*, to the dream of Hans Castorp which is a dream of mankind and a dream of love. Here is a moment in Thomas Mann's work where the endless play of dialectics comes to a rest. After having practiced the dangerous morality of surrender to the dark forces of death, disease, and morbid sensuality, the hero displays a morality of self-conquest: he takes his stand in the middle and confesses both his reverent sympathy with death and his moral faith in life, in mankind.

It is this love of man which prevented Thomas Mann from being carried away by his ironic temper and ending up with an attitude of total irony, equivalent to nihilism. The works of the mature author betray his deep yearning for a harmonious polarity hidden behind the display of dialectic ambiguities. The mystical longing for the all-embracing unity of being stems from Thomas Mann's romantic heritage. In his early works it finds fulfillment in death. With his turn toward the classical heritage, however, the unity of the opposites is no longer to be found in the world beyond, but in human life. By reconciling the contradictions of existence, man fulfills the secret wish of the world-soul. Significantly enough, Hans Castorp realizes that his dream of the *Homo Dei* is not at all a private affair: "Die große Seele, von der du nur ein Teilchen, träumt wohl mal durch dich, auf deine Art, von Dingen, die sie heimlich immer träumt,—von ihrer Jugend, ihrer Hoffnung, ihrem Glück und Frieden. . . ."⁵ In the mythical language of *Joseph*, Thomas Mann calls the mutual pene-

⁴ Goethe und Tolstoi, in *Adel des Geistes* (1948), p. 304.

⁵ *Der Zauberberg* (1925), II, 257.

tration of nature, soul, and spirit "die stille Hoffnung Gottes."⁶ These terms reveal the mystical and eschatological aspects of art which amplify the author's anthropocentric philosophy. In his mature works, from *The Magic Mountain* to *Joseph and His Brothers*, the protagonist is called upon to fulfill the divine dream of harmony. (It is not by chance that Thomas Mann shares this ideal of the artist as the harmonizer of the world with such outstanding poets of his own generation as Rilke and Hofmannsthal.)

Only if we keep this concept of art in mind, will we realize the true meaning of tragedy in Thomas Mann's work. We will also understand that genuinely tragic aspects could not develop until the author had found a position and function of the artist in life, that is to say, after *Tonio Kröger*. Hanno Buddenbrook's fate is not a tragedy, since he has nothing to fight for and welcomes death as his savior from the sufferings of life. Gustave Aschenbach in *Death in Venice*, on the other hand, must be considered a tragic figure. As a matter of fact, he has certain features in common with Adrian Leverkühn in *Doctor Faustus*, archetype of the tragic artist in Mann's work.

In this paper we shall examine *Death in Venice* in order to clarify a few essential questions. We ask: What are the preconditions of tragedy in Thomas Mann's world? What is the hero's guilt? What does destiny stand for? Does the catastrophe hold any ulterior promise?⁷

Gustave Aschenbach, the distinguished writer, who meets death in Venice after a fantastic erotic adventure with a Polish boy of divine beauty, has been characterized as a mature Tonio Kröger. Indeed, there are strong similarities, but, on the other hand, even more characteristic differences. As mentioned before, the novella *Tonio Kröger* is one of Mann's first attempts to visualize a reconciliation between art and life. The hero, standing between the world of the artist and of the bourgeois, realizes that he must draw on both of them in order to be a true poet. He experiences the solitude, the torments, and the icy ecstasies of the creator who lives only in order to create and loves nothing but perfect form. Between excesses of cold intellect and scorching sensuality, however, he feels a nostalgia for the human, the living, the usual. Finally, he comes to understand that this love of mankind, springing forth from the depths of his heart and his soul, raises him above the Bohemian, the literary man, the nothing-but-artist. Tonio Kröger then aspires for human self-integration, for a well-balanced harmony of intellect, sensuality, heart, and soul. Precisely this harmony is denied to Gustave Aschenbach, and his one-sided disposition is one of the reasons of tragedy.

⁶ *Joseph und seine Brüder* (1952), I, 53.

⁷ The style of *Death in Venice* has been analyzed repeatedly during the last years; cf. André von Gronicka, "'Myth plus Psychology': A Style Analysis of *Death in Venice*," *Germanic Review*, XXXI (1956), 190-205; Fritz Martini, *Das Wagnis der Sprache* (Stuttgart, 1954), pp. 178-224; Benno von Wiese, *Die deutsche Novelle von Goethe bis Kafka* (Düsseldorf, 1956), pp. 304-24.

To be sure, the power of feeling is given to Aschenbach as well as to Tonio Kröger. In contrast to Tonio, however, he tyrannizes heart and soul in the service of his art which is devoted to the creation of pure beauty and perfect form. He falls a victim to the temptation which Tonio Kröger overcame: to die to life in order to be utterly a creator. The artist appears here in the image of the martyr who sacrifices human feeling and warmth for the sake of artistic perfection. There are different reasons for this sacrifice: worship of beauty, social ambition, and, last but not least, the obligation of the artist to respond to the needs of his epoch.

The destinies of both Aschenbach and Adrian are closely interconnected with the development of European civilization. They live in a time of cultural decline. Their own catastrophes anticipate the European catastrophes of our century, World War I and World War II. Aschenbach's weakness, the loss of vitality under the paralyzing effect of intellectual and psychological relativism, reflects the weakness of a decadent age. His style of life and his art must be understood as an attempt to stop the process of moral disintegration by going to the other extreme: Aschenbach is inclined to see himself as a soldier who has to perform the duty of moral and aesthetic self-conquest in the general interest. Thomas Mann indicates the combination of subjective and objective demands on his hero by emphasizing the "Aufgaben, welche sein Ich und die europäische Seele ihm stellten."⁸

Indeed, Aschenbach feels called upon to save European civilization by transforming weakness into strength. For this purpose he tries to utilize the heritage of Prussian morale and pseudo-classical aesthetics. To be sure, his heroism born of weakness finds the admiration of his contemporaries but cannot offer a true solution to the problems of the day. The story shows that the overstrained morality of discipline and form is just as disastrous as the irresponsible autonomy of the critical intellect, since neither of them leads to the harmonious integration of human qualities.

Was there an alternative? Was it in Aschenbach's power to live and create in harmony? Obviously, the answer must be: No. Neither the personal disposition nor the historical situation of the hero allows a positive solution. Here, as well as in *Doctor Faustus*, Thomas Mann emphasizes the tragic fact that the artist cannot create at will. The ways and means of artistic creation are predetermined by the laws of history which do not always coincide with God's wish for world harmony.

Like all concepts in Thomas Mann's world, history appears under two aspects which may be characterized as *Gotteszeit* and *Teufelszeit*. The artist can play his role as a mediator only if there is a balance of power, if the constellation of the light and dark forces provides for a middle position which is the cosmic place of the *Homo Dei*. This

⁸ *Der Tod in Venedig*, in *Novellen* (1925), II, 353.

is the hour of promise when man and the world seem to be ready for fulfillment of the divine dream. Under the other aspect, the historical situation appears as the hour of doom in which cultural decline assumes the form of cosmic catastrophe. The bond between God and man is broken, the divine powers withdraw and leave the world in the grip of the demons. The artist then becomes a victim of the two unreconciled extremes: icy intellect and scorching sensuality. The result is self-destruction instead of self-integration.

We have come to realize that the tragic necessity in the fate of the artist is determined by the metaphysical constellation of the divine and the demonic. On the other hand, we must also consider the problem of tragic guilt. Again the analogy between Aschenbach and Adrian is obvious. Both of them are marked by the arrogance and pride of the emancipated mind that has lost contact with the soul. Both of them originally lack the blessing of true love which is both human and divine.

If we keep this deficiency in mind, we realize that Aschenbach's downfall is a very complex development which can be seen from different angles. First of all, there is the psychological aspect. We can say he became a victim of the instincts and emotions which he suppressed and tyrannized until they burst forth and overwhelmed the tyrant. From this point of view, Aschenbach's catastrophe is due to the revenge of the subconscious. Destiny appears as the Id that turns against the Ego in self-destruction, because it was denied harmonious fulfillment through self-integration. The subconscious as destiny—Thomas Mann was familiar with this thought through the philosophy of Schopenhauer. Later on, he found it confirmed by the psychoanalytical "Einsicht in die geheimnisvolle Einheit von Welt und Ich, Schicksal und Charakter, Geschehen und Machen, in das Geheimnis also der Wirklichkeit als eines Werkes der Seele."⁹ Aschenbach's fateful trip to Venice, his "accidental" failure to leave the city of his doom while he had still a chance to escape—all this looks like a demonstration of Thomas Mann's psychological insight expressed in artistic form.

However, the psychological theory of a secret unity between subjectivity and objectivity, between the soul and the world, leads us beyond the limits of psychology into the realm of metaphysics which, in our case, is the realm of the myth. The style of *Death in Venice* is characterized by a masterful blending of the real and psychological with the mythical. Modern Venice and the soul of a modern writer, which are described in realistic detail, become the scene of a fascinating and terrifying pandemonium. The subjective forces of the subconscious appear in mythical objectivity. Aschenbach's secret yearning for the opposite of his own austere life and art reveals itself as the psychological equivalent to the demonic power of Dionysos,

⁹ Freud und die Zukunft, in *Adel des Geistes* (1948), p. 562.

the stranger-god, arch-enemy of the Apollonian world of reason, law, order, and human dignity.

Dionysos, who represents the orgiastic aspect of Eros, stands for primeval chaotic unity in which the lust for life and the lust for death are one. His symbolic geographical home is not Greece but Asia, the hot moist swamps of the delta of the Ganges, which breed the abundance of tropical life and, at the same time, the germs of the Plague. A specter from the East, this deadly disease holds Venice in its grip, undermining law and order and provoking excesses of crime and vice unheard of under normal conditions. It provides the macabre atmosphere which dominates the end of the story and anticipates the European catastrophe to come.

To be sure, Aschenbach experiences his final surrender to Dionysian barbarism in a dream. But Thomas Mann indicates the objective significance of this nightmare by pointing out that Aschenbach's soul is the theater of the bacchanalia and that the events burst in from outside. In the end, the identity of subjective urge and objective myth is once more emphasized: Aschenbach himself, at first only a spectator of his dream, participates in the orgy of promiscuous embraces and tastes "Unzucht und Raserei des Untergangs" in his very soul.¹⁰

Obviously, *Death in Venice* is meant to be more than a psychological study. Destiny appears as the Dionysian Eros, as that demon, "dem es Lust ist, des Menschen Vernunft und Würde unter seine Füße zu treten" (p. 422). We realize now that Aschenbach is lured to Venice by the messengers of the demon who appear in different forms so that their victim is unable to identify them and to disentangle himself from the net of fate. But if Dionysos is allowed to cast his spell over Aschenbach's soul, where is Apollo? Where are the saving forces which, according to Hölderlin, grow in the presence of danger?

As mentioned before, these forces are absent in Thomas Mann's tragic setting, or, even worse, they seem to be absorbed by their antithetical opponents. In this pan-erotic world the divine reveals itself as the demonic; Apollo turns out to be Dionysos in dialectic disguise. "Denn die Schönheit, Phaidros, merke das wohl," says Socrates, the mythical representative of Aschenbach's modern ego, "ist göttlich und sichtbar zugleich, und so ist sie . . . der Weg des Künstler zum Geiste. Glaubst du nun aber, mein Lieber, daß derjenige jemals Weisheit und wahre Manneswürde gewinnen könne, für den der Weg zum Geistigen durch die Sinne führt?" (p. 447)

This question reflects Thomas Mann's profound skepticism toward art which, paradoxically enough, coincides with his fervent belief. In *Death in Venice* this skepticism is based on the relationship between artist and beauty which is full of tragic irony. The enthusiastic worshiper of beauty is, at the same time, its helpless victim. Through beauty, he experiences the highest elevation and the deepest degrada-

¹⁰ *Der Tod in Venedig*, p. 441.

tion, for in beauty resides the fatal unity of the divine and the demonic.

The Polish boy, Tadzio, whom Aschenbach meets in Venice is the personification of this aesthetic polarity. Modern individual and ancient myth, he represents the embodiment of perfect beauty, of "Form als Gottesgedanken" (p. 407). The analogy of Tadzio as a divine work of art and Aschenbach's own artistic creation is obvious. The austere creator of Apollonian form meets the mythical image of his aesthetic ideal and can see in it a supreme confirmation of his creative efforts. But this gratifying experience is only a fleeting episode in Aschenbach's development. Very soon, he begins to feel the impact of the sensual, immoral aspect of beauty which arouses his passions and throws him into a state of wild and sweet intoxication. In Tadzio's pure Apollonian features, Aschenbach recognizes the head of Eros, and the poor condition of the boy's teeth indicates, as so often in the works of Thomas Mann, his relationship with death and disease. The mythical identity between Tadzio and Dionysos, the stranger-god, is finally revealed in Aschenbach's dream through the symbolism of the long-drawn *u*-sound which fuses the vocative of Tadzio's name with the rallying cry of the bacchanals.

Thus, the dilemma of the artist appears to be hopeless. His devotion to knowledge leads to intellectual relativism, his preoccupation with beauty and form ends in emotional excesses. Unable to achieve human harmony, he is headed for the bottomless pit. Thomas Mann's vision of the *Abgrund* seems to anticipate the destiny of Adrian in *Doctor Faustus*. He, too, is driven toward the bottomless pit from his birth on. So gloomy is this outlook, so full of despair that we may well ask: Is there no ray of light? In spite of all his skepticism, Thomas Mann, the artist, could not condemn his own image completely. There is a turning point at the very end of the novella, although well prepared in advance. It is based on the fact that beauty has still a third aspect which, in a way, embraces both the Apollonian and the Dionysian. Shortly after his arrival at the Lido, Aschenbach meets Tadzio in a setting of highly symbolic significance. As he is resting on the beach, losing himself in the wideness of the sea, the margin line of the shore is broken suddenly by a human form. It is the image of perfect beauty that crosses Aschenbach's vision and fuses for a moment with the immensity of space. Tadzio and the sea—at first glance, it seems as if they had nothing in common, as if they were just hostile extremes: form and formlessness, beauty and nothingness. But the author indicates a deeper interconnection between these opposites by asking the question: "ist nicht das Nichts eine Form des Vollkommenen?" (p. 388)

Indeed, there is a profound relationship between Tadzio and the sea; as perfect shape and pure shapelessness, they both symbolize the divine. And so it can come to pass that Tadzio, image of Apollonian beauty and center of Dionysian rapture, is visualized by Aschenbach

in the moment of his death as "der bleiche und liebliche Psychagog" (p. 451). This word creates a mythical association between Tadzio and Hermes Psychopompos, messenger of the gods and leader of the souls to the underworld. Here, however, death loses its Dionysian aspect. It is no longer connected with sensual orgy, but holds the tremendous promise of the infinite and the eternal. Tadzio's smile, his beckoning, may appear to Aschenbach as an ultimate justification. The artist, worshiper and victim of beauty, who suffered the most degrading punishment for his moral arrogance, for his neglect of the irrational and the emotional, is now, after all his sufferings, ready for his final transfiguration.

Was this end present in the beginning? Can we assume that there is a third aspect of destiny in Thomas Mann's story corresponding to the third aspect of beauty? Did Aschenbach meet death and transfiguration through divine guidance hidden behind the revolt of his emotions and the destructive magic of the demon? Was this perhaps the only way for him to pass through the dialectic contrast of Apollonian form and Dionysian chaos in order to find contact with the great unity of being—the mysterious superconscious, present in and working through the subconscious? Did the author, while writing *Death in Venice*, have the hypothesis in mind, which he formulated later on in *The Magic Mountain*: "es möchten Verbindungen und Zusammenhänge zwischen den untersten und lichtlosen Gegenden der Einzelseele und einer durchaus wissenden Allseele bestehen?"¹¹

Questions, questions. The early Mann, who was what Hofmannsthal called a mystic without mysticism, never felt entitled to lift the veil from the eternal mystery. In *Death in Venice*, however, as well as in *Doctor Faustus*, the author grants us certain hints indicating that the sufferings of his tragic heroes are not in vain. The fundamental artistic problem for both Aschenbach and Adrian is to overcome the sterilizing effect of aesthetic formalism, symptom of the decaying middle-class civilization, and to break through to a new art representing the spontaneous unity of artistic form and human feeling. The composer Adrian Leverkühn achieves this highest goal of creation in his last compositions. Inspired by demonic forces, they visualize the triumph of hell by means of a violent musical barbarism. But at the same time, they express the yearning of the human soul calling for salvation *de profundis*, and must be considered as artistic documents of a religiosity beyond despair. Conceived through evil, they break the spell of evil and prepare the way for a new age.

In *Death in Venice*, Aschenbach does not produce a work of art of this epoch-making significance. And yet there is a certain equivalent which has escaped the attention of most interpreters. In the beginning of Aschenbach's emotional crisis, there comes a moment when Tadzio's divine form inspires him to create. He feels the urge "seine

¹¹ *Der Zauberberg*, II, 526 f.

Schönheit ins Geistige zu tragen, wie der Adler einst den troischen Hirten zum Äther trug." Writing a little essay which, by the way, is also his last creation, he feels as never before "daß Eros im Worte sei." Now, art is to him not a rigid, cold, and passionate service as before, but an expression of joy and love. The result: "jene anderthalb Seiten erlesener Prosa . . . , deren Lauterkeit, Adel und schwungende Gefühlsspannung binnen kurzem die Bewunderung vieler erregen sollte."¹²

In this moment of mental equilibrium which precedes Aschenbach's catastrophe, he accomplishes the ideal which Tonio Kröger had visualized: art as the miraculous unity of form and feeling, of self-conquest and self-surrender, of the sensual and the spiritual. It is important to realize that in Thomas Mann's work even the tragic artist, who is a victim of the unreconciled extremes, achieves artistic harmony in the supreme moment of his creative development. In contrast to the more fortunate protagonists, however, who are allowed to combine the harmony of art and the harmony of human existence, his way to the divine leads through self-destruction—or rather, through self-sacrifice.

University of Washington

¹² *Der Tod in Venedig*, p. 410.

EDUARD VON KEYSERLING AS A DRAMATIST

By WILLIAM WEBB PUSEY III*

"Count Eduard Keyserling has died, who wrote the play *Frühlingsopfer*, the author of such elevated, modest, pure, and imperishable stories as *Beate und Mareile*, *Wellen*, *Bunte Herzen*, and *Abendlische Häuser*," wrote Thomas Mann in 1918.¹ Even to the admirer of these exquisite tales, it may come as a surprise that almost twenty years later Mann remembered Keyserling's first drama, or even that Keyserling wrote plays at all. While today his dramatic production may be forgotten by all save the specialist in early twentieth-century German literature, it was as a writer of plays that he first achieved a reputation and a measure of fame. It will be the purpose of this paper to sketch Keyserling's literary career in Munich during the brief period in which he was active as a playwright, to document the presentation of his plays and describe the contemporary reaction to their performances, to attempt an independent critical evaluation of them as pieces of literature, and, finally, to show their relationship to his now more famous stories.

The man who was to become the sensitive depicter of the decaying aristocracy of the Baltic provinces, and also one of the most penetrating and stylistically accomplished German authors of psychological fiction in the modern period,² had left his native Courland and settled in Munich late in 1895. By the time he was forty years old, Keyserling had published only the naturalistic novels *Fräulein Rosa Herz* (1887) and *Die dritte Stiege* (1891), which, according to his friend Max Halbe, it seemed he would have preferred to disclaim.³ During the early years of the new century there appeared his first and one of his best *Schloßgeschichten*, *Beate und Mareile* (1903), and the provocative essay "Zur Psychologie des Komforts" (1905). A collection of novellas, *Schwüle Tage* (1906), marked the beginning of the series of stories and novels on which his lasting literary reputation is based. During this period, however, the bulk of his work consisted of the four plays: *Ein Frühlingsopfer* (1900), *Der dumme Hans* (1901),

* I am indebted to Professor Frederic E. Coenen of the University of North Carolina for reading this paper for me to the German Section of SAMLA, Nov. 29, 1957.

¹ "Zum Tode Eduard Keyserlings," *Rede und Antwort* (Berlin, 1922), p. 258.

² Cf. my article, "Point of View in the Novels and Stories of Eduard von Keyserling," *Germanic Review*, XXXII (1957), 273-81.

³ Halbe, *Jahrhundertwende: Geschichte meines Lebens, 1893-1914* (Danzig, 1935), p. 321. Different dates are sometimes given for these early works. I have accepted the dates listed in Hinrichs' *Fünfjahrs-Katalog*.

Peter Hawel (1904), and *Benignens Erlebnis* (1906). Published by the influential S. Fischer Verlag, these constitute Keyserling's entire printed dramatic writings.⁴

There is little autobiographical material about Keyserling available, for his request that his posthumous papers be destroyed was scrupulously carried out.⁵ Consequently, his mode of life in Munich during the early 1900's and his interest in the theater must be pieced together largely from accounts of friends and acquaintances.⁶ For some five years he was a dominant figure in a small group of men of letters and the theater who met regularly in the late afternoon at the Café Stephanie. Wedekind, Halbe, Kurt Martens, Arthur Holitscher, Peter Altenberg over from Vienna, were at one time or another among its members. They exchanged views on such subjects as art, imagination, basic realities of existence, and human experience. Martens relates how this "terribly ugly yet wonderfully spiritualized" aristocrat—one is reminded of Corinth's extraordinary portrait of Keyserling—would lean wearily over a cup of tea, make brief, amicably malicious remarks, bring up literary questions of the day, and get absorbed in philosophical propositions.

During these years Keyserling was very much interested in the theater. He attended all premières. He recommended the performance of a drama by Holitscher, reviewed a play by Hirschfeld, published a comparison of the dramatic and epic treatment of death in a Berlin newspaper, was asked by the periodical *Nord und Süd* for his views on the cultural value of the theater.⁷ When a group of painters, musicians, sculptors, and poets joined together in 1901-02 to form "Die elf Scharfrichter," Keyserling contributed a one-act play, "Die dunkle Flasche," in which Wedekind took the main role.⁸

It was the impending presentation of *Ein Frühlingsopfer* which had originally called Halbe's attention to his fellow resident of Munich. Otto Brahm, director of the once influential Freie Bühne in Berlin, which had sponsored plays by Ibsen, Hauptmann, Anzengruber, and Strindberg, informed Halbe that he might give Keyserling's piece a try for the sake of literature, although he did not expect

⁴ The last three were listed as available in the 1924 edition of *Feiertagskinder* (Berlin: S. Fischer), but as far as I know have never been republished. The stories in *Schwüle Tage* had appeared individually in *Die neue Rundschau* in 1901, 1904, and 1905, respectively.

⁵ Otto Freiherr von Taube, "Erinnerungen an E. von Keyserling," *Die neue Rundschau*, XLIX (Sept., 1938), 302-303.

⁶ See Halbe, *Jahrhundertwende*, pp. 316-25; Arthur Holitscher, *Lebensgeschichte eines Rebellen* (Berlin, 1924), pp. 192-94; Kurt Martens, *Schonungslose Lebenschronik* (Wien, 1921-24), I, 247-48; Otto Freiherr von Taube, "Nachwort," *Keyserlings Schwüle Tage und andere Erzählungen*, Manesse Bibliothek der Weltliteratur (1954), pp. 326-27; Frank Wedekind, *Gesammelte Briefe*, hrsg. Fritz Strich (München, 1924), II, 73-74.

⁷ Review of Hirschfeld's *Nebeneinander* in *Der Tag*, March 29, 1904; "Das dramatische und das epische Sterben," *Der Tag*, Nov. 4, 1906; see also Käte Knoop, *Die Erzählungen Eduard von Keyserlings* (Marburg, 1929), p. 1.

⁸ Wedekind, II, 93-94. On the "Scharfrichter," see Albert Soergel, *Dichtung und Dichter der Zeit*, 9. Auflage (Leipzig, n. d.), p. 826.

to make much money with it. The play was then produced as a matinee on November 12, 1899, at the Lessingtheater in Berlin under the auspices of the Freie Bühne.⁹ It was played again one evening later during the same month. It was performed in 1902 twice at the Deutsches Volkstheater in Vienna and several times as a special presentation at the Schauspielhaus, Munich's literary stage. Individual performances of *Ein Frühlingsopfer* were later given in Oldenburg, Dresden, Gießen, Marburg, Straßburg, and in the season 1909/10 in Breslau.

Keyserling's next play, *Der dumme Hans*, had its première on May 4, 1901, at the Residenz-Theater in Berlin in the season following the first presentation of *Ein Frühlingsopfer*. As in the case of its predecessor, this was also a matinee outside the regular repertory. Furthermore, it was a benefit performance and was not repeated. *Der dumme Hans* apparently had the least appeal of Keyserling's plays on the stage, for it seems to have been presented only once more, at the Munich Volkstheater in 1905.

Peter Hawel, Keyserling's third play, was performed for the first time in October, 1903, at the Schauspielhaus in Munich, where it was repeated three times in that month. It was offered in the same season in Cologne and Oldenburg and in the next season in Leipzig. It was revived in 1909/10 in Munich, where it had five performances.

The première in March, 1905, of *Benignens Erlebnis* also took place at the Schauspielhaus in Munich, where the play was then given six times in all. In the following seasons it was presented in Cologne, Zürich, and Elberfeld. In 1905/06 it was performed fifteen times at the Lessingtheater in Berlin, marking the height of Keyserling's stage popularity.

It must be abundantly clear from this barren statistical enumeration that Keyserling's plays proved unsuitable for popular or successful stage presentation. They were given less than seventy-five times in eleven seasons beginning with 1899/1900, when *Ein Frühlingsopfer* was first produced. Compare this meager total with the 1,260 performances of Meyer-Förster's *Altheidelberg* or the 1,125 performances of Sudermann's dramas in 1901/02 alone.¹⁰

Keyserling attended the premières of all his plays except that of *Ein Frühlingsopfer*, which was given in Berlin when he was on a trip to Italy. However, he was kept busy answering the congratulatory letters and telegrams it evoked.¹¹ He was called for several times at the end of its first presentation in Munich.¹² Keyserling

⁹ For dates of performances of Keyserling's plays, see *Deutscher Bühnen-Spielplan* (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel). I have consulted the volumes dealing with the seasons 1899/1900 to 1909/10 inclusive.

¹⁰ Totals listed by Friedrich Kummer, *Deutsche Literaturgeschichte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts* (Dresden, 1909), p. 695.

¹¹ Otto Freiherr von Taube, "Daten zur Biographie Edwards von Keyserling," *Euphorion*, XLVIII (1954), 97.

¹² *Allgemeine Zeitung*, July 8, 1902 (*Abendblatt*).

must have been mortified at the performance of *Der dumme Hans* in Berlin, for the spectators, unmoved by the intended tragedy, laughed on several occasions. Even in a loyal and more friendly Munich the applause at this play was tempered by doubts about the validity of its conclusion.¹³ *Peter Hawel* received respectful but not exactly stormy applause in Munich, which Keyserling refused to augment by showing himself on the stage.¹⁴ At the successful première of *Benignens Erlebnis* in his adopted city Keyserling finally had his brief moment of glory, acceding to the repeated calls for the author and appearing on the stage with the director of the Schauspielhaus, Georg Stollberg.¹⁵

To judge by a sampling of contemporary comments, the performances of Keyserling's plays received a mixed critical evaluation.¹⁶

¹³ *Vossische Zeitung*, May 5, 1901; *Allgemeine Zeitung*, Feb. 22 1905 (*Vorabendblatt*). However, *Berliner Tageblatt*, May 5, 1901, stated that it was received in Berlin "in a very friendly fashion."

¹⁴ *Allgemeine Zeitung*, Oct. 12, 1903 (*Abendblatt*).

¹⁵ *Allgemeine Zeitung*, March 10, 1905 (*Vorabendblatt*); see also review by Hanns von Gumpenberg, cited in part by Adelbert Muhr, "E. von Keyserling als Dramatiker," *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, No. 80 (1943).

Since a familiarity with the content of Keyserling's plays cannot be assumed, I should like to insert here a brief summary of their plots, in order to make more intelligible the ensuing discussion of the contemporary critical reaction to their performances and my evaluation of them as literature.

Orti, the heroine of *Ein Frühlingsopfer*, is the illegitimate seventeen-year-old daughter of a poor, drunken Lithuanian villager, whose wife, Anne, is on the point of death. In order to save this woman who has been good enough to take her in, and because she is ignored by the young men of the village, especially rich Indrik with whom she is secretly in love, Ortí begs the Virgin to take her life in return for Anne's. She believes her request is granted, and Anne appears to be getting better. However, she prays for postponement, since Indrik suddenly pays attention to her. When soon thereafter he deserts her, she takes her own life in despair, a victim of the impossibility of achieving her share of happiness.

"Der dumme Hans" is another adolescent victim of circumstances. The son of poor people who have settled illegally in the forest of an estate in East Prussia, Hans is wrongfully accused of having shot the Baron who intends to cut down the woods and evict the squatters. Feeling that he is sacrificing himself for the forest, which will now remain untouched, Hans refuses to name the real assassin. Awaiting execution, he is visited in his cell by the "Frölen," the Baron's teen-age daughter, with whom he has played on the estate in happier days. He takes a lyrical farewell of her, and consoled, is led off to his death.

The action of *Peter Hawel* also takes place on an estate in the east. The time is the present. A landless villager by birth, Peter has bought the property after the suicide of its bankrupt aristocratic owner, and married his daughter, Marga. Marga has been unfaithful to Peter, but is now returning poor and ill to the manor as a last refuge. In the subsequent struggle between them for dominance Peter is goaded into pushing his wife off a cliff. This act of violence is witnessed by a radical labor leader, whose attempt to secure far-reaching privileges for the peasants Peter has just decisively defeated. When the agitator tries to blackmail him, Peter shoots himself.

Benigne has been vainly waiting during the twenty-three years of her sheltered existence for a real experience (*Benignens Erlebnis*). This is finally supplied by a wounded student who finds his way into her aristocratic father's villa during the revolution in Vienna of 1848. Benigne falls madly in love with the student, but does not succeed in reaching a genuine understanding with him before he dies of his wound.

¹⁶ In addition to reviews listed in notes 12-15, above, see also Erich Schlaikjer,

In calling attention to a combination of romanticism and naturalism in *Ein Frühlingsopfer*, for instance, one reviewer praised the graceful interweaving of delicate mysticism with the completely realistic action. Another commentator, however, condemned the concessions made to both romanticism and naturalism, disparaged the addition of romantic leaven to what could have become a naturalistic drama, and concluded that the play was a hodgepodge of all possible styles.

There was also disagreement about the poetic value of *Ein Frühlingsopfer*. One critic called it "one of the few recent pieces written not by an author but by a poet"; another mentioned Keyserling's especial gift of uniting the lyrical with the dramatic; and a third pointed to the gleam of doleful and touching poetry surrounding the figure of Ortí. Martens wrote in 1906 that *Ein Frühlingsopfer* owed its life to the lyric atmosphere about Ortí that "threw a dreamlike light on her wretched hut, the forest, the miraculous chapel, and her entire Lithuanian homeland." To one reviewer, on the other hand, Keyserling's whole form of expression in this play was "inwardly untrue, hollowly pathetic, and unpoetically naive," while another found that despite moonlight, fragrance of lindens, and songs of nightingales, spring remained only a stage property. Finally, some critics objected to the motivation of Ortí's sacrifice, which they considered theatrical rather than dramatic.

Performances of Keyserling's second play also elicited both favorable and unfavorable comment, with the latter, however, predominating. While, for instance, Max Burckhard, the former pioneering director of the Vienna Burgtheater, was impressed by the love for the forest and nature emanating from *Der dumme Hans*, and found the piece an advance over its predecessor, it was just this forest atmosphere that offended another reviewer, who was vexed by the author's efforts to create a fairy-tale mood with old German firs and forest animals. This critic felt that *Der dumme Hans* destroyed for the present any hopes Keyserling had raised with his first play, while another commentator concluded that he might yet produce a more popular and harmonious work, although he was still only a talented beginner, a kind of "Sudermann without experience in writing for the stage."

A number of reviewers commented on the conclusion of the tragedy, in which the "Frölen" visits Hans in prison. Burckhard praised the atmosphere of this scene, but wished the piece had ended with the couple in each other's arms, dreaming of the forest. Another critic was revolted at the execution of an innocent boy, solely as a result of a misunderstanding. Still another reviewer found the end of the play not without charm, although crude and absurd and clearly inferior to the last act of Anzengruber's *Das vierte Gebot*. A fourth, a

Vorwärts, Nov. 14, 1899; Rudolf Steiner, *Das Magazin für Literatur*, Nov. 18, 1899; Hans von Weber, *Die Gesellschaft*, XVI¹ (1900), 379; *Neue Freie Presse* (Wien), May 18, 1902; *Die Zeit*, May 24, 1902; and Kurt Martens, "Graf Eduard Keyserling," *Das literarische Echo*, IX (Dec., 1906), 328-34.

would-be wit, expressed his ridicule as follows: "und während sie (das Frölen) von seinen Küssemüde einschläft, lässt sich der glückliche dumme Hans ein wenig köpfen."

While Martens held that *Peter Hawel*, like *Der dumme Hans*, made concessions to coincidence and was too theatrical, to the reviewer of its Munich première Keyserling's third play, like *Ein Frühlingsopfer*, was the work of a genuine poet. *Peter Hawel*, this critic contended, had more than a moral—it had a *Weltanschauung*. Its author used motivations more subtly than Hauptmann and showed a stronger tragic talent than Halbe, both of whom his piece recalled a little. While, the commentator continued, the basic tragedy of the man-woman relationship was impaired by the addition of the peasant revolt as a secondary plot, *Peter Hawel* was still one of the most significant recent works, written with style, logic, honest care, and the "calm intelligence of a distinguished mind."

Keyserling's last play, *Benignens Erlebnis*, was hailed by one commentator on its first presentation as a "very delicate, subtly drawn, and artistic work." This reviewer praised the witty dialogue with its repartee, clever phrases, penetration, and gentle irony, and predicted success for the "little work," if it received a fittingly subtle performance. The satirist and playwright, Hanns von Gumpenberg, commented favorably on the humorous portrait of the aristocrats' dreary home, although he felt that the caricature was too pronounced and too north German. Martens speculated whether Keyserling might not be destined to establish the dialogue-drama on the German stage, finding in him the requisite judgment, knowledge of human nature, inexhaustible wit, and sharply polished language. Benigne's father and his faithful servant, and her mildly ironical uncle who resembled Keyserling himself, Martens considered excellently perceived stage figures, fully able to replace an external plot.

The inability of Keyserling's plays to maintain themselves on the stage—due in part to the various deficiencies to which contemporary critics called attention and, to a lesser degree, possibly, to the prevailing literary taste of a period falling between naturalism and expressionism—would indicate that as a practicing playwright he can only be considered a failure. It now remains to evaluate his dramatic works as drama rather than theater, as they appear to the thoughtful reader who of necessity must examine them for literary values, not just for their suitability for the stage.

Three of Keyserling's pieces warrant critical attention. While *Der dumme Hans* contains an occasional pleasing lyrical scene, this is not enough to sustain the entire work, which on the whole seems contrived and arbitrary. *Der dumme Hans* is manifestly the poorest of the group.

Ein Frühlingsopfer, on the other hand, although it was Keyserling's first dramatic attempt, seems to be the best and the most appealing of the four. The village background is faithfully depicted,

and the peasants' speech convincingly reproduced. The deeper forces impelling Ortí to suicide—the thwarting of her inherent will for life and happiness, and the wish to impress the others by her great deed—are fused with her more surface desire to repay her stepmother's kindness, which gives a compelling complexity to her motivation. The scene at the tavern, in which Ortí saves Indrik from assault by the city slicker, has both humor and pace. Ortí's pleas to the Madonna for a reprieve for her sacrifice, so that she can enjoy her new-found happiness with Indrik, are not without genuine pathos. The combination of naturalism and lyrical mysticism gives to the play a certain off-beat charm that will not elude today's readers.

It is apparent that Keyserling intended *Peter Hawel* as a full-length, "important" drama in the manner of Ibsen. Unlike his previous pieces, it contains no mystical or lyrical elements. It is a naturalistic problem play, and the problem is the personal relationship of a strong-minded and rather dour peasant-turned-landowner and his beautiful, vain, selfish, domineering, and unfaithful wife. Peter struggles unsuccessfully to overcome the physical desire she arouses in him, feeling that it is base and evil. She exploits his ambivalent attitude toward her, tormenting and humiliating him for his self-righteousness and possessiveness. Theirs is a battle of the sexes that reaches an intensity reminiscent of Strindberg.¹⁷ Although he is the loser in this contest, Peter is the victor in the revolt of the peasants, which is suspensefully recorded and skillfully woven into the main plot. Only a certain ponderousness in psychological motivation and occasionally in dialogue keeps *Peter Hawel* from being a first-rate play.

With *Benignens Erlebnis* Keyserling left the field of regular-length drama for the short dramatic sketch. The two noblemen and the loyal stiff-necked servant in this playlet are less characters than types, but they are entertaining types. The dialogue is generally both sardonic and sprightly. Keyserling illustrates in these two acts the theme—which became a basic conviction with him—that it is impossible for two human beings genuinely to understand one another, for Benigne is attracted by just that strength, love of freedom, and fervor in the student that loving her would force him to give up. *Benignens Erlebnis*, it must be admitted, does not carry great dramatic impact, but it is not without deeper meaning and charm.

It is fair to conclude that Keyserling's plays by no stretch of imagination or excess of scholarly partisanship may be considered great, and that only *Ein Frühlingsopfer* may justly be rated as intrinsically a good piece of literature. However, the plays have, in addition, a significance to the student of modern German literature for the light

¹⁷ In Strindberg's *The Father* (1887, produced by the Freie Bühne 1890/91), the machinations of the Captain's scheming wife result in a straight jacket being slipped on him from behind. Compare with this Peter's aside, when the agitator tries to blackmail him: "Das Narrenhemd übergeworfen—die Ärmel hinten fest gebunden . . ." (p. 166).

they can shed on the author's development and for the parallels they offer to the novellas and novels on which Keyserling's real reputation is based.

It is interesting to note the gradual emergence in the dramatic work of the aristocratic types Keyserling excels in portraying in his stories. There are no aristocrats whatsoever in *Ein Frühlingsopfer*. The Baron in *Der dumme Hans* is clearly a Keyserling figure, so distant and reserved that his mere presence brings all spontaneous life to a standstill. Peter Hawel's nephew is a typical young Keyserling aristocrat, while Peter's wife, with her resentment of her duty-conscious husband and her demand for the little pleasures of life, is an early model of Irma in the novel *Feiertagskinder* (1919). Finally, in *Benignens Erlebnis*, which among the four plays most closely resembles the stories in subject matter and atmosphere, all the chief characters, with the exception of the student, are aristocrats.

In the plays, as in his fiction, there are persons whom life passes by without fulfillment.¹⁸ After a few brief hours with Indrik, Ortí in *Ein Frühlingsopfer* is forced to give up her claim to happiness. The old Baron in *Der dumme Hans* complains: "Hinter den Thüren hör' ich—man ist heiter—und—wenn ich komme—Nichts . . ." (p. 51). Peter Hawel's housekeeper has no life of her own: "Ich setz' mich an fremde Tische" (p. 34), she tells her employer. And Benigne offers a palpable example of the desperate effort to seize "das Wilde, Heiße und Starke" (p. 70) of life, which comes to nought. She appears to the student as "weiß," living in a world wrapped completely in shining, white wool. She has something in common with the "weiße Frauen" Keyserling described in the almost contemporaneous *Beate und Mareile* (1903) and *Harmonie* (1905).¹⁹

Keyserling, in general, is more concerned with human relationships than with ideas, and thus finds it important in his plays to reproduce faithfully each character's manner of speech. He already shows that keen ear for the flow of dialogue which is one of the most distinguishing marks of his fiction.

On the whole, Keyserling's dramatic works also manifest the interest in psychological motivation and the suspension of moral judgment that characterize his stories. In both he painstakingly explores and exposes the mental states of his characters. In neither does he too obviously take sides, or tell his spectators or readers how they should feel about his creations. Actually, this attitude of detachment, so effective in the stories, may have contributed to the general lack of success of his plays.

In summary, it may be stated that Keyserling was a failure as a playwright, although his plays themselves are not without value and

¹⁸ Cf. Ernst Heilborn, "Eduard Graf Keyserling, sein Wesen und sein Werk," *Keyserlings Gesammelte Erzählungen* (Berlin, 1922), I, 3-8.

¹⁹ Cf. the unpublished paper (read to Kentucky Foreign Language Conference in April, 1957) by Kathryn A. Johnson, "The Character of Fastrade in *Abendliche Häuser*."

interest, and one at least, *Ein Frühlingsopfer*, has considerable literary merit. It appears that soon after his arrival in Munich Keyserling set out to make a name for himself as a dramatist. Participating with typical detachment in the active literary life of the Bavarian capital around the turn of the century, he wrote, saw produced, and had published four plays. These had a mixed reception from audiences and critics, but they brought him, temporarily at any rate, a degree of fame as a man of letters. Their comparative lack of success, however, must have been a strong factor in turning him to the writing of the stories of aristocratic life for which his subtle and refined talent was to prove more suitable.

The plays show the development of types, themes, and methods that were to become characteristic of his fiction. It can be concluded that the experience Keyserling gained from meeting the basic dramatic requirement for convincing dialogue proved of great use to him in the composition of the conversations which he employed so extensively and so skillfully in his stories.

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THE ENGLISH NOVEL
A CRITICAL VIEW, 1756-1785

PART II*

By CLAUDE E. JONES

The five features of the novel which received most attention during the period 1756-1785, were morality, sentimentality, characterization, probability, and the introduction of romantic love as motivation. I shall consider these in order, inasmuch as upon them was based the main body of novel criticism during this period. Although the critics were not very clear as to just what they wanted as to form, they agreed on one thing throughout—the necessity for high moral standards for the genre, partly because of the impressionable readers for whom the novel held its greatest appeal. The fiction writers inherited from the Middle Ages the idea of using didactic materials in fiction. From the *Gesta Romanorum* and the "tragedies" read by the monks, to *Guzman de Alfarache* and *Meriton Latroon* was not a long step, as to ostensible and stated purpose. The first great non-allegorical English novelist to claim a moral basis for his work was Defoe, whose *Roxana* and *Moll Flanders* are, according to their author, narrative sermons, and in whose *Robinson Crusoe* and *Colonel Jacques* the same moralizing elements are discernible.

Richardson, in the preface to *Clarissa Harlowe*, says that his purpose is to "warn the inconsiderate . . . to caution parents⁷⁶ against undue exercise of authority . . . to warn children . . . to investigate the highest and most important doctrines not only of morality but of Christianity." Thomas Amory, in the preface to his *Life of John Bunle* (1756-1766) asserts:

Were I able to write so as to persuade even a few to alter their way of living, and employ their time for the future, in forming and training up their moral powers to perfection, I should think myself more fortunate and glorious than the greatest genius in the temple of Fame.⁷⁷

The usefulness of the novel as moral teacher is also pointed out by Richard Graves in *The Spiritual Quixote* (1772):

I am convinced that *Don Quixote* or *Gil Blas* or *Sir Charles Grandison* will furnish more hints for correcting the follies and regulating the morals of young persons, and impress them more forcibly in their minds than volumes of severe precepts seriously delivered and dogmatically enforced.⁷⁸

* Part I appeared in the June, 1958, issue of *MLQ*.

⁷⁶ Smollett's *Peregrine Pickle* is also an interesting precursor of *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* and *David Copperfield* in this respect.

⁷⁷ New ed., I (London, 1770), p. vi.

⁷⁸ Prefatory Anecdote, ed. Charles Whibley (London, 1926), p. 3; and see

That this attitude was not restricted, during the forties, to a few novelists is evident from Peter Shaw's comment in 1750: "There are Swarms of Moral Romances."⁷⁹ Walpole says in *The Castle of Otranto* (1764), "The piety that reigns throughout, the lessons of virtue that are inculcated and the rigid purity of the sentiments, except this work from the censure to which romances are but too liable."⁸⁰

During the second half of the eighteenth century, however, there are many references to the immoral tendency of most novels, and the genre is attacked as bitterly, and for the same reason, as the stage had been for 150 years. Lyttleton says in his *Dialogues* (1760) :

Our Books...not only dispose to Gallantry and Coquetry but give rules for them. Caesar's Commentaries, and the account of Xenophon's Expedition, are not more studied by military commanders, than our Novels are by the Fair.⁸¹

The following comment by William Cowper, in 1782, is interesting in this connection:

Ye writers of what none with safety reads,
Footing it in the dance that fancy leads:
Ye novelists, who mar what ye would mend,
Sniv'ling and driv'ling folly without end,
Whose corresponding messes fill the ream
With sentimental frippery and dream,
Caught in a delicate soft silken net
By some lewd earl or rake-hell baronet:
Ye pimps, who under virtue's fair pretence,
Steal to the closet of young innocence,
And teach her, inexperienced yet and green
To scribble as you scribbled at fifteen....
Howe'er disguised th' inflammatory tale
And covered with a fine spun specious veil
Such writers, and such readers owe the gust
And relish of their pleasure all to lust.⁸²

These comments show that some of the authors had, or at least professed to have, moral aims in writing, and that many of the novels during this period served to arouse the baser passions. Let us turn to the remarks of the reviewers on the necessity for moral purpose in

the preface to *Roderick Random*: "Of all kinds of satire there is none so entertaining and universally improving as that which is introduced, as it were, occasionally in the course of an interesting story, which brings every incident home to life." In view of Graves's examples, it is interesting to note that Smollett modeled this novel on *Gil Blas* as he did *Sir Launcelot Greaves* on *Don Quixote*.

⁷⁹ *Reflector* (London, 1750), p. 14; see also *Rambler*, No. 4 (1750): "The purpose of these writings is...to teach the means of avoiding the Snares which are laid by Treachery for Innocence."

⁸⁰ Preface to the 1st edition.

⁸¹ Dialogue No. 28. For a later comment see T. S. Mathias, *Pursuits of Literature*, 16th ed. (London, 1812), p. 72: "the modern farrago of novels which have been too often, as they have been named, receipts to make whores."

⁸² *Progress of Error*, lines 307-18, 327-30; see also Goldsmith, *Citizen of the World* (1760), Letter LII: "the pretty innocents now carry those books openly in their hands, which formerly were hid under a cushion."

the novel and their opinions of novels which lacked such purpose.

The reviewers, in forming their criteria for the novel, were influenced by the types of readers who subscribed to circulating libraries. The critics had much to say about the possibilities of the genre for conveying instruction. In January, 1758, one reviewer remarks, "Novels, if well written, may be of great use."⁸³ In January, 1759, there is a more inclusive statement:

Novels are chiefly read by those whose affections are stronger than their judgment: to address such, therefore, with propriety, the writer's chief aim should be to make them solicitous in the catastrophe, even though faultless monsters, as the poet expresses it, ladies all beauty, and men all excellence, become the objects of their admiration. Strict morality may seem to veil her rigid appearance: the reader is to be allured, as if in search of pleasure, and it is the writer's fault, if he knows not at last how to surprize him into reformation.⁸⁴

Another class of readers is mentioned in March, 1759: "books of this kind are chiefly calculated for, and read by, the lower class of mankind. . . . Works of this nature might be wrote so as to inspire sentiments of diligence, industry and frugality."⁸⁵ In May, a reviewer says, "One great aim of novel-writers ought to be, to inculcate sentiments of virtue and honour, and to inspire an abhorrence of vice and immorality."⁸⁶ The next year this comment appeared: "As the chaste writer of novels may be deemed, of all others, the most useful moralist, so we may venture to pronounce the obscene and profane historian of feigned transactions, the most dangerous enemy of society."⁸⁷

The same criterion is applied to short stories: "the fable may be well intrusted to the perusal of youthful innocence, as it is *naturally* capable of conveying the purest instruction, and most undefiled morality."⁸⁸ Furthermore, "[an author] ought not to let any manuscript of his find its way to the press, which contains a syllable that may prove offensive to the chastest ear. . . ."⁸⁹ Another comment on the fable type appears in 1774: "instruction may be conveyed more forcibly by fable than by precept; but to that end it is necessary that the moral not only appear at first sight, but carry conviction of its truth. . . ." And later in the same year, the following analysis is presented:

To preach grave doctrines of morality, without intermixing something of entertainment, and to give precepts without examples, are methods so unlikely

⁸³ V (Jan., 1758), 31.

⁸⁴ VII (Jan., 1759), 68.

⁸⁵ VII (March, 1759), 282.

⁸⁶ VII (May, 1759), 409.

⁸⁷ X (Oct., 1760), 280; and see XLVIII (Sept., 1779), 236: "When fiction is employed in the cause of virtue, it becomes a profitable entertainment; but when exerted to promote the purposes of licentiousness, there is not a more dangerous enemy to the morals of the reader. By infusing its poison into the imagination, it compels the heart in the surest manner, and soothes, while it undermines, every salutary principle and affection."

⁸⁸ XXV (May, 1768), 361.

⁸⁹ XXXI (June, 1771), 479. The following quotation appears in XXXVII (Feb., 1774), 141.

to succeed, in competition with that which mixes the useful with the agreeable, that it is not surprising we meet with so many attempts at the latter; and that novels in particular, a species of writing which aims strongly to unite instruction and entertainment, fall so frequently under our inspection. Amongst these it is, indeed, seldom that we have an opportunity to compliment the writers on their success; but this is the fault of the workmen, not of the species of employment.⁹⁰

The Triumph of Truth is praised in 1775 because in it "we are led to the conclusions of philosophy, and the maxims of religion, without either the intervention of metaphysical subtlety, or dry theological discussion."⁹¹ One reviewer speaks of the abuses and possibilities of the form:

Novel-writing, it has been contended by many, is too often attended with fatal and destructive consequences, more especially to the younger part of the fair sex.... If ladies, indeed, make it their whole study, and swallow with avidity every idle tale that is published, there may doubtless be some truth in the assertion. We have always, notwithstanding, been of the opinion, that this species of writing, if well executed, may afford both innocent amusement and profitable instruction. If the story is agreeably told, if the incidents are natural and probable, and the characters well and accurately drawn, a good novel may certainly tend to ridicule and expose vice and folly, and promote the interest of honour, religion, and virtue.⁹²

Thus the critics had at least one definite constructive idea: that the novelist should include a moral lesson whenever possible. Many amoral or immoral novels were published at this time, despite comments such as the following which was made by an optimistic reviewer in October, 1764:

The charge of corrupting the morals and inflaming the passions, which has formerly been objected against works of this kind, seems now no longer to subsist. A modern romance may now with safety be put into the hands of the youthful reader; and tho' perhaps it may not allure the imagination, yet will it tend to reform the heart.⁹³

Laurence Sterne is, of course, one of the most important novelists of the period; yet he is censured by the *Critical* for immorality and licentiousness. When Volumes I and II of *Tristram Shandy* appeared in 1760, the review was, on the whole, favorable.⁹⁴ On the publication of Volumes III and IV in the following year, the reviewer commended them in general and claimed credit for having "discovered" the book, but included this stricture:

A spirit of petulance, an air of self-conceit, and an affectation of learning, are diffused through the whole performance, which is likewise blameable for some gross expressions, impure ideas, and a general want of decorum.⁹⁵

⁹⁰ XXXVIII (Dec., 1774), 455.

⁹¹ XXXIX (April, 1775), 287.

⁹² L (Sept., 1780), 168; and see LVII (March, 1784), 236.

⁹³ XVIII (Oct., 1764), 313.

⁹⁴ IX (Jan., 1760), 73-74. The review is extremely short and is included in the Monthly Catalogue. In April a reviewer says, "we must own we are tired with the encomiums bestowed on Tristram Shandy.... We would caution the author and his friends against raising the public expectation of the subsequent

In January, 1762, Volumes V and VI were published, and the reviewer found that they contained "the same unconnected rhapsody, the same rumbling digressions, the eccentric humour, the peculiar wit, petulance, prurience and ostentation of learning, by which the former part was so happily distinguished."⁹⁶ Sterne's "original" is identified as Rabelais, both in 1761 and 1762, and the book is praised for its pathos and sentiment. The latter review concludes with the comment, "We know not whether most to censure the impertinence, or commend the excellencies of this strange, incongruous, whimsical performance." In January, 1765, Volumes VII and VIII are reviewed unfavorably, with the remark that they contain no room for approbation, and that the wit and humor of Sterne will soon be worn rotten.⁹⁷ A spurious Volume IX is censured for indecencies in February, 1766,⁹⁸ while moral grounds also furnish the reviewer of the genuine Volume IX with a reason for disapproval.⁹⁹ The *Critical's* adverse comments seem to be based on the moral laxity of part of the novel, as well as on its affected singularity.

Sterne's *Sentimental Journey* received much harsher treatment from the *Critical* reviewer:

if substituting immorality, impudence, and dullness, in the room of virtue, decency, and wit, can recommend a publication, that before us is respectable.... [Sterne is] a favourite with thoughtless insipidity, and the dictator of lewdness and dissipation.¹⁰⁰

The review of Volumes I and II of Sterne's *Sermons* contains the comment that "The reverend Mr. Sterne aims at mending the heart, without paying any great regard to the instruction of the head," as well as praise of the author for his "goodness of heart."¹⁰¹ The last two volumes, however, are characterized as "slight and superficial."¹⁰² The best résumé of the *Critical's* attitude toward Sterne is, perhaps, this: "As often as we drew our pen against Mr. Sterne's works, it

part, too high" (p. 319). In September a spurious Volume III is denounced (X, 237-38) and its author censured for attempting to pass it off "for the supplement to a production, as celebrated for its wit as this certainly will be for its dullness."

⁹⁶ XI (April, 1761), 314-17. The reviewer says that Rabelais "is the pattern and prototype of Tristram Shandy," and considers the work planless.

⁹⁷ XIII (Jan., 1762), 67. The following quotation in my text appears on p. 69. Other interesting estimates are these: "The episode of Le Fever is beautifully pathetic"; "The author has contrived to make us laugh at the ludicrous peculiarity of Toby, even while we are weeping with tender approbation at his goodness of heart"; "It [the recording angel] is a conceit of genius, glowing with the warmth of a heart truly sentimental."

⁹⁸ XIX (Jan., 1765), 65-66.

⁹⁹ XXI (Feb., 1766), 141.

¹⁰⁰ XXIII (Feb., 1767), 135-38.

¹⁰¹ XXV (March, 1768), 181. But see XLVII (May, 1779), 376: "Sterne's *Sentimental Journey* was universally read; and his little sallies of wit, his touches of nature, tenderness, and pathos, were admired and applauded." Possibly the adverse criticism was called forth by Sterne's attack on Smollett as "Smell-fungus."

¹⁰² IX (May, 1760), 405-407.

¹⁰³ XXVIII (July, 1769), 48.

was in the cause of virtue . . . we thought him immoral; we thought him even sometimes dull."¹⁰³

The same moral strictures are made on other contemporary novels. In the first number of the *Critical*, a reviewer says of Perin's *L'Empire des Passions*: "the sole merit it can have in the eyes of any reader is a dash of obscenity, with which all the French authors of this class take care to season their productions."¹⁰⁴ In June, 1776, *The Vicar of Wakefield* is praised because it contains "nothing . . . to turn the attention upon the writer, or to inflame the passions of the reader . . ."¹⁰⁵ Two years later, *Another Traveller* is preferred to Sterne's work because in it the reviewer does not find "any of those reprehensible passages which so justly gave offence to virtue and modesty, in the works of Tristram Shandy."¹⁰⁶ The novels of Treyssac de Verge are branded as "luscious";¹⁰⁷ furthermore, the critics disliked the frequent "indecent recital of such adventures as are supposed to happen in convents. . . ."¹⁰⁸ *The Unguarded Moment*, despite its title, receives this comment: "The laudable design with which this novel seems to have been written is sufficient to rescue it from a severe scrutiny as a literary composition."¹⁰⁹ This is interesting in view of a later claim;

We never fail to recommend to the public the works of those authors who endeavour with any tolerable degree of success, to inculcate a detestation of vice; and are ever sparing of censure when we meet with unsuccessful endeavours for that purpose.¹¹⁰

A reviewer praises Smollett's *Humphrey Clinker* because it is "calculated at once to amuse the imagination, and release the understanding from prejudice."¹¹¹ *The Correspondents* is censured four years later as one of those "seducing publications which constitute the chief

¹⁰³ XXIX (Feb., 1770), 102. But see LV (May, 1783), 341: "The portraits of Sterne want no original; they are the children of feeling; the efforts of lively imagination, suggested by the slightest circumstances, in unison with the present disposition."

¹⁰⁴ I (Jan.-Feb., 1756), 93. See also the reviews of *Candide*: VII (June, 1759), 551: "[It consists of] the ravings of a delirious poet, strung together without order, or the least shadow of verisimilitude, invented and introduced with a view to disgrace human nature"; and XII (Aug., 1761), 138: "We cannot . . . upon the whole approve any design, that tends to degrade human nature, arraign the justice of Providence, render us dissatisfied with our existence, and to ridicule the moral and physical economy." And see XXXVIII (Nov., 1774), 393.

¹⁰⁵ XXI (June, 1766), 440; see also IV (Dec., 1757), 543, and VII (April, 1759), 372.

¹⁰⁶ XXVI (Nov., 1768), 354.

¹⁰⁷ XXX (Oct., 1770), 239 n., 488; and see Tompkins, *Popular Novel*, pp. 4 n., 24-26.

¹⁰⁸ XXXI (April, 1771), 315. The *Critical* also objected to novels in which the heroine retires to a convent for peace, as encouraging Catholicism. XXVIII (Aug., 1769), 133.

¹⁰⁹ XXXI (June, 1771), 482.

¹¹⁰ XXXIX (June, 1775), 478.

¹¹¹ XXXII (Aug., 1771), 88. Smollett is praised for moderation in his *Adventures of an Atom* (which modern critics censure as vulgar and exaggerated) in XXVII (May, 1769), 362-69.

furniture of circulating libraries . . ."¹¹² In 1785 there is a comment on Goethe's *Sorrows of Werther*:

Its warm animated language, the strong expressive feelings of a heart torn with anguish, and of resolution weakened by distress, allures with irresistible power; with a power which we fear has sometimes led the reader of a congenial soul to a similar fate. On these and many other accounts, it is poison to a mind diseased. . . .¹¹³

Morality, then, is the foundation for much of the novel criticism included in the *Critical Review* during the period 1756-1785. Although one writer says, "It is far from our intention to become advocates for prudery,"¹¹⁴ the critics inform their readers of the moral value of every novel reviewed. Such attitudes influenced their criticism of characters in general and of the employment of love as a dominant passion in the novel of the period.

Mrs. Aphra Behn, first of a long line of English women novelists, wrote in *The Fair Jilt* (1688): "As love is the most noble and divine passion of the soul, so it is that to which we may justly attribute all the real satisfactions of life; and without it man is unfinished and unhappy."¹¹⁵ This passion afforded an opportunity to those female novelists who appeared during the second half of the eighteenth century to improve over the work done by three of the great writers of prose fiction during the era. Only Richardson had attained any degree of success in handling love, and the heroines and other young women of Smollett, Fielding, and Sterne are, on the whole, a sorry lot. So the critics turned, as Miss Tompkins has pointed out,¹¹⁶ to the newly developed group of women writers to supply the deficiency. *The History of Wilhelmina Susannah Dormer*, for example, receives the following significant praise:

In the common run of love-stories, we find the lovers who were paired in the beginning, however they happened to separate, cross hands, or cast off, in the interim, sure to meet in matrimony at the end; but in this, even youth, love, and beauty are made subservient to merit, and the piece concludes with more than poetic justice.¹¹⁷

The matrimonial ending is censured not only for its frequency in novels of the time, but also because it is not a good policy to have "the nuptial union of persons in very opposite ranks of life."¹¹⁸ One critic

¹¹² XXXIX (April, 1775), 341.

¹¹³ LX (Aug., 1785), 141; see also XLVII (June, 1779), 477: "We cannot but agree with those who consider Mr. Goethe, its original author, as the apologist of suicide."

¹¹⁴ XXXII (Sept., 1771), 208.

¹¹⁵ *Novels of Mrs. Aphra Behn* (London and New York [n.d.]), p. 83.

¹¹⁶ *Popular Novel*, pp. 124-25, 317.

¹¹⁷ VII (Jan., 1759), 67; see also XXII (Nov., 1766), 361: "time immemorial, novels of this kind always end in happy marriages"; XXXV (Feb., 1773), 147: "others of the dramatis personae [of C. M. Wieland's *Reason Triumphant over Fancy*], whose histories are introduced in the course of this work, unite also in matrimonial bands, and the piece concludes quite in the taste of modern romance."

¹¹⁸ XXXIX (June, 1775), 509.

speaks of the "labyrinths of romantic love";¹¹⁹ another censures "readers . . . enamoured with ideas of Platonic love and sylvan retirement."¹²⁰ In 1772 a reviewer notes, "A man of sense may write *about* that passion [i.e., love]; a man of feeling only can paint it."¹²¹ One of the most interesting comments on love is this:

Gallantry has banished love. An indiscriminate profusion of unmeaning compliments paid to the fair sex in general, has, in a great measure, supplanted that devoted attachment to one single woman, which constitutes the true passion of love.¹²²

In general, the critics do not dislike "love, the life and soul of romance,"¹²³ although they "lament the ill tendency of such novels as impress young minds with romantic notions of love."

As in their consideration of the drama, however, the critics paid more attention to the characters themselves than to the passions which motivated them. One critic recognized that "one of the most difficult tasks which a novelist has to perform, is the inventing and proper colouring of new characters."¹²⁴ The most frequently debated types were perfect characters and those drawn from the lowest or highest ranks of society.

The *Rambler* (1750) holds no brief for low life because Johnson feels that realism is no excuse for indecency, inasmuch as "it is necessary to distinguish those parts of nature which ought to be drawn."¹²⁵ This is also the opinion of the *Critical*, although *Emily* is praised because it contains characters who "are various, pretty well drawn, and such as common daily life furnishes."¹²⁶ For one thing, "It requires the art of a master to exhibit a character in the lowest scenes of indigence, still an object of attention and esteem."¹²⁷ The only authors who are praised by *Critical* writers for their creations in the lower ranks of society are Fielding, "that consummate biographer in low-life,"¹²⁸ and Smollett, in whom the "admirable faculty of describing sea characters with propriety [is] so conspicuous."

On the other hand, the critics disapprove of the preoccupation of some contemporary novelists with high society:

The purchasers of novels, the subscribers to circulating libraries, are seldom in more elevated situations than the middle rank of life. —The subjects of novels are, with a dangerous uniformity, almost always taken from superior life. —The satirists complain with injustice of the want of virtue in our modern nobility; when the hero and the heroine of every novel hardly ever fail, sooner or later, to turn out a lady or a lord. What effect has this upon the readers? They are

¹¹⁹ XXIII (March, 1767), 218.

¹²⁰ XXIII (April, 1767), 273.

¹²¹ XXXII (Sept., 1771), 231.

¹²² XXIII (March, 1767), 211.

¹²³ XXX (Dec., 1770), 417. The quotation which follows is from XL (Aug., 1775), 164.

¹²⁴ LIV (Dec., 1782), 416.

¹²⁵ No. 4 (1750).

¹²⁶ I (March, 1756), 125.

¹²⁷ XV (Jan., 1763), 16.

¹²⁸ XXXIV (July, 1772), 51-52. The following quotation occurs in XIII (May, 1762), 428.

convinced that happiness is not to be found in the chilling climate of low life, nor even, where one of our poets so truly fixed it, in the temperate zone of middle life.¹²⁹

The *Critical*, a Tory journal, was not so uncomplimentary in its references to the nobility as the occasion may have required; Fielding's remark, "the splendid palaces of the great are often no other than Newgate with the mask on," was still true.

Another development of fictional characterization, and one which drew the fire of the *Critical* writers, was the use of perfect heroes and heroines. Johnson, in the *Rambler*, defends this practice: "In narratives, where historical veracity has no place, I cannot discover why there should not be exhibited the most perfect idea of virtue."¹³⁰ The author of *The Virtuous Widow*, however, is censured in the *Critical* because

in all her works we scarcely meet with the character of a real man and woman, as they come from the hands of nature, with passions to influence, and reason to direct them. Her agents are all superior beings, either divine or diabolical; they observe no medium in their conduct, nor are they composed of flesh and blood.¹³¹

Another reviewer comments on *The History of Mr. Byron and Miss Greville*: "As usual the hero and heroine are all perfection, in person, sentiment, morals, and conduct. . . ."¹³²

The critics also recognize the need for contrasting characters,¹³³ although they dislike the "characters so perfectly good, and so irrevocably bad," which Henry Brooke included in his *The Fool of Quality*. One reviewer, in describing a young ingenuous hero, says, "The capital is the only proper theatre for the exhibition of such a character. . . ."¹³⁴ On the whole, the *Critical* reviewers encourage the use of middle-class London characters, sufficiently differentiated to avoid confusion, and near enough to life to avoid perfection.

The feature of the *Critical Review's* comments on the novel which may have been greatly influenced by classical and Renaissance criticism is the reviewers' interest in, and insistence upon, probability and vraisemblance. Throughout the thirty-year period, review after review contains strictures on plots which include romantic, improbable incidents; and it is only when the critics are judging historical novels and Eastern tales that their insistence on this feature is relaxed. The more significant criticisms in regard to probability in general, with the exceptions made in favor of period and Eastern novels, prove well worth examination.

¹²⁹ XLVI (Sept., 1778), 203-204.

¹³⁰ No. 4 (1750). But see Peter Shaw, *The Reflector* (London, 1750), pp. 15-16.

¹³¹ XXI (June, 1766), 438; and see XV (Jan., 1763), 30.

¹³² XXIII (March, 1767), 217; see also XXV (April, 1768), 284: "perfect, and therefore insipid and uninteresting, characters"; LIX (April, 1785), 316; XLI (May, 1776), 387. But see VII (Jan., 1759), 68.

¹³³ II (Dec., 1756), 451. The following quotation appears in XXX (Dec., 1770), 459.

¹³⁴ XLI (May, 1776), 384.

As early as November, 1756, an author is cautioned "to chasten his imagination, and adhere closely to verisimilitude, or probability."¹³⁵ Three years later, a reviewer says, "French romances [are] characterized by a wild imagination, little judgment, [and] no probability."¹³⁶ In view of the miraculous adventures and fortuitous escapes frequently included in sea stories, from the Greek romances to the present day, it is not surprising to find the remark, "marine situations [are] extremely convenient to gentlemen who deal in the *wonderful*."¹³⁷ One reviewer notes that William Beach's *Abradates and Panthea* "is too romantic to be affecting to a reader of true taste";¹³⁸ another says that Marmontel's characters "are such as never existed in life; and therefore his incidents and catastrophes are equally absurd, as they are improbable, and, in many respects, impossible."¹³⁹ *The History of Eliza* is praised because "Tho' this performance is of the novel kind, yet we scarcely meet with an occurrence in it which may not happen in common life, without appearing extraordinary."¹⁴⁰ In 1772 a critic remarks that "extravagant characters, and a series of romantic adventures, which terminate in marriage, are the usual subjects of a novel."¹⁴¹ Six years later, the author of *The Example* is said to have "put together a bundle of incidents which the wildest child of romance can never believe";¹⁴² in 1782 a critic remarks that *Anna* "wants that degree of probability, which alone can give due operation to fictitious narrative."¹⁴³

The lack of verisimilitude in historical novels, which include most of the early "horror" stories, is best defended by Walpole in his *Castle of Otranto*:

Belief in every kind of prodigy was so established in those dark ages, that an author would not be faithful to the manners of the times who should omit all mention of them. He is not bound to believe in them himself, but he must represent his actors as believing them.¹⁴⁴

Although this novel was said by the critics to be composed of "rotten materials," the sentiment expressed in the Preface approximates the *Critical's* attitude. On the other hand, authors who portray historical characters in novels are, as a rule, to keep the truth in mind. The most satisfactory statement of this attitude is as follows:

¹³⁵ II (Nov., 1756), 357; see also I (April, 1756), 262; IV (Dec., 1757), 461; VII (March, 1759), 283.

¹³⁶ VIII (Oct., 1759), 302.

¹³⁷ XIX (March, 1765), 237. See J. R. Watson, *The English Sailor in Fiction and Drama* (New York, 1928).

¹³⁸ XIX (May, 1765), 394.

¹³⁹ XX (Dec., 1765), 448; and see XXI (Feb., 1766), 139.

¹⁴⁰ XXII (Dec., 1766), 434.

¹⁴¹ XXXII (Nov., 1771), 372; see also XXIX (May, 1770), 366; XXX (Oct., 1770), 307; XXX (Dec., 1770), 419, 481.

¹⁴² XLVI (Oct., 1778), 299.

¹⁴³ LIV (Oct., 1782), 320.

¹⁴⁴ Preface to the 1st ed., 1765. *The Castle of Otranto* was reviewed in XIX (Jan., 1765), 50-51; see also XLIV (Aug., 1777), 154: "if the dramatic poet is allowed to introduce them [i.e., ghosts] with impunity, the novel-writer has a claim to a like indulgence."

This writer [i.e., the anonymous author of *The History of Lady Anne Neville*] appears not to have so critically distinguished between a *fable*, and a *falsehood*, as he ought to have done, in a composition of this kind, where it is only permitted to create imaginary personages, by way of *machinery*, or to support those that are introduced upon the scene of action, who had really existed, to be involved in particular situations and circumstances, which had never befallen them, for the better carrying on the plot. So far the *licentia poetica* extends, and there it rests. But to belie historic records and characters...is to use a liberty beyond the laws either of the novelist, the dramatist, or any other dealer in fiction.¹⁴⁵

The *Critical* reviewers approved of historical novels and encouraged their authors.¹⁴⁶ This is not true of Eastern tales, however, although in these they also allowed improbable incidents which might seem to be in keeping with the localities treated.¹⁴⁷

The fifth feature commented on at length in the *Critical* is sentimentality. The great number of women novelists and the increase of humanitarianism in all classes of society during the period assisted in popularizing this sentiment, which had been important even in the work of Richardson, Fielding, and Smollett. The greatest contributing factor, however, was the emphasis placed on sensibility, on the aristocracy of sensitivity, which developed among the enthusiastic admirers of Sterne, Rousseau, Mackenzie, and Brooke. The type of sentimentality which resulted from a conscious appeal to the heart rather than to the head was highly esteemed by the critics. In this they were, of course, in the stream of pre-Romanticism.

The necessity for writing not from the intellect and the imagination, but from the heart, was maintained throughout the period.¹⁴⁸ For this reason the critics approved of Rousseau, though they considered him inferior to Richardson.¹⁴⁹ The Frenchman, according to one reviewer, exhibits a "novelty of sentiment," and all his works are animated by "a spirit of freedom." He is, however, censured for peculiarity, especially in advocating a return to the "state of nature."¹⁵⁰ Mrs. Sheridan is also favorably compared with Richardson because her *Memoirs of Miss Sidney Bidulph* is characterized by "the same elegant fluency of narrative, the same interesting minuteness, inimitable simplicity, delicacy of sentiment, propriety of conduct, and irresistible pathos" which distinguished *Clarissa*. Further, her char-

¹⁴⁵ XLI (March, 1776), 240. And see Thomas Leland, *Longsword*, new ed. (London, 1775), Advertisement.

¹⁴⁶ XXXVII (June, 1774), 472: "A legendary tale has something in its nature apt to impose upon the imagination, by the venerable robe of antiquity in which it is usually veiled." See also LV (April, 1783), 233; LVII (April, 1784), 316.

¹⁴⁷ See XIV (Oct., 1762), 276; XVIII (July, 1764), 35; XXVII (April, 1769), 178. Of interest in this regard is the fact that Smollett was most active in writing Eastern tales.

¹⁴⁸ See I (Jan.-Feb., 1756), 92; XXVIII (Oct., 1769), 247; XXXI (June, 1771), 479; XXXIV (July, 1772), 65.

¹⁴⁹ See XI (Jan., 1761), 67; XII (Sept., 1761), 205-206.

¹⁵⁰ XI (Jan., 1761), 65; see XIV (Nov., 1762), 336: "it is probable, that his writings will be admired as the effusions of genius, while his precepts will be neglected as the effects of caprice and affectation." The following comments appear in XI (March, 1761), 197; XXXVII (Jan., 1774), 46.

acters are "beyond measure affecting and pathetic." In 1763 a female author is praised for being "as sentimental as Rousseau, and as interesting as Richardson";¹⁵¹ three years later Henry Brooke's lachrymose *Fool of Quality* earns for its author the following comment:

There is a freedom and a goodness of heart discernible through the whole, which, to a benevolent mind, may be more pleasing than a strict adherence to occurrences of common life, and to what the painters call the *il custumi*.¹⁵²

One reviewer makes these remarks about domestic settings:

The representation of domestic life is a source of moral entertainment, perhaps, the most instructive and congenial to the universal taste of mankind, of all the various scenes with which the human drama presents us. It is within the compass of that narrow sphere that the tender emotions of the heart are excited in their utmost sensibility: where the mind receives its earliest cultivation, and either enjoys its most solacing delights, or feels its severest distresses.¹⁵³

In 1771 the publication of Mackenzie's *The Man of Feeling* brought forth this criticism:

By those who have feeling hearts, and a true relish for simplicity in writing, many pages in this miscellaneous volume will be read with satisfaction.... The story of Old Edwards is exquisitely affecting....¹⁵⁴

The reviewer of Mrs. Griffiths' *The History of Lady Barton* calls it "one of the best novels that we have lately perused" because "while we tremble for the sensibility, we admire the virtue and sympathize with the distress of the heroine."¹⁵⁵ In general, then, the *Critical* writers approved of sentimentality of incident and character and suggested domestic settings as most efficacious in arousing it.

I have tried to indicate the place of the novel during the period 1756-1785, the function of the circulating library in its development, the *Critical* reviewers' opinions of the novel in general, and their attitudes toward certain important features of contemporary fiction: morality, the use of love as motivation, characterization, probability, and sentimentality. Further, I have tried to show that Richardson, Fielding, and Smollett, three early masters of the English novel, were continuously popular with the critics, as were Mackenzie, Brooke, Rousseau, Mrs. Griffiths, and Mrs. Sheridan. Only Sterne and Goethe were underestimated in comparison with their subsequent reputations. The novel, like other forms of literature, was judged by the criteria of common sense, restraint, sentiment, and the conviction that all art should have a moral purpose.

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¹⁵¹ XVI (July, 1763), 45.

¹⁵² XXII (Sept., 1766), 204.

¹⁵³ XXVII (April, 1769), 297; see also XXXVIII (Dec., 1774), 449.

¹⁵⁴ XXXI (June, 1771), 482-83. The story of Old Edwards occurs in Chapter 34.

¹⁵⁵ XXXII (Nov., 1771), 376.

FROM EARDSTAPA TO SNOTTOR ON MODE
THE STRUCTURAL PRINCIPLE OF "THE WANDERER"

By THOMAS C. RUMBLE

Though it is relatively short, and though it exists in a fairly extensive body of Old English poetry, "The Wanderer" has probably occasioned more scholarly controversy than any Old English poem except the epic, *Beowulf*. Early scholars thought that "The Wanderer" consisted almost wholly of pagan material—that it was a piece which, together with certain other poems considered to be of a similar pagan nature, was interpolated into the primarily Christian matter of the *Exeter Book*, a collection of Old English poetry of both literary and historical interest presented to the library of his cathedral by Leofric, the first bishop of Exeter, probably in the year 1046.¹ Later, scholars began to question the nature of the poem itself, feeling that there were superimposed upon the essentially pagan material of the poem certain Christian concepts, which almost surely represented the additions of some early Christian scribe in copying the poem.²

For the past half-century,³ however, scholars have centered their attention not so much upon theories of hypothetical interpolations as upon matters having to do with the theme of the poem and, more especially, with its structure. They have advanced opinions that it is basically pagan in nature, or basically Christian, or a mixture of both; they have held that it is a self-contained poem, having its own special kind of organic unity, or that it shows a definite lack of unity; they have seen it as a dialogue between a wanderer and a wise man, or simply as the monologue of a wanderer, which is in turn set forth and commented upon by the poet; they have concluded that it is, after all, little more than an extremely primitive elegy, or that it is essentially a kind of lament-and-consolation poetic *exemplum*.⁴

¹ The theory of these interpolations is advanced by Sir William Craigie, "Interpolations and Omissions in Anglo-Saxon Poetic Texts," *Philologica*, II (1923-24), 5-19.

² R. M. Lumiansky comments on the "extravagant theories" of Boer and Imelmann which appear to result from this scribal-interpolation theory. See his article "The Dramatic Structure of the Old English *Wanderer*," *Neophilologus*, XXXIV (1950), 104-12.

³ Beginning with W. W. Lawrence's article, "The Wanderer and the Seafarer" (*JEGP*, IV [1902], 460-80), in which Lawrence at least attempts to establish the structural unity of the poem, though he regards its subject matter as being a fusion of Christian and pagan elements.

⁴ For a more detailed account of this entire critical controversy, see the introduction to Lumiansky's "Dramatic Structure."

Though for some time now theories of Christian interpolation have not been quite in vogue, recent criticism seems to me to reflect fairly completely the controversial points of view which from the very beginning have characterized various critical interpretations of the poem. And although this recent criticism suggests that we are perhaps no nearer now than ever to any real reconciliation of the controversy, there is, I think, an increasingly unanimous general agreement that the poem is basically Christian in its theme and basically unified in its structure. Before turning again to the poem itself, I wish briefly to review some of the most important of modern interpretations.

G. K. Anderson, in one of the most recently published books on Old English literature, describes "The Wanderer" as "a somber, powerful poem . . . clearly elegiac in tone . . . [and] relatively free from traditional Christian formulas and exhortations."⁵ But the last few lines, Anderson feels, are anticlimactic to the "triumphant pessimism" of the rest of the poem; and since these lines seem to him "weak and intrusive . . . moralizing lines which have nothing in particular to do with the *Wanderer*," he regards them as "a sop to Christianity from the hands of some pious scribe."⁶

As I have suggested, however, Anderson's point of view constitutes something of a deviation from the general trend of recent criticism. In 1943, for example, B. F. Huppé expressed the opinion that both unity of structure and Christianity of theme are demonstrated in "The Wanderer" by the fact that the poem is composed of two contrasting parts: a central episode (lines 6-111), consisting of pagan material which is set forth in terms of a dialogue between *eardstapa* and *snottor*; and a framework (1-5, 112-15), consisting of Christian matter which is set forth in terms of the poet's comment on this dialogue and given emphasis by the very nature of the contrast itself. Huppé concluded that the unity of both structure and theme are thus developed by the "contrast between earthly insecurity and heavenly security: a contrast stated in the beginning, developed in the body, and summarized at the end of the poem."⁷

Huppé's interpretation of "The Wanderer" has been rather widely objected to, but it is nevertheless indicative of the direction which later criticism has taken. In articles written at very nearly the same time (though published some nineteen months apart), S. B. Greenfield and R. M. Lumiansky both criticized Huppé's conception of the structural unity of the poem, particularly in that they both regarded the central part of the poem as the single speech of an *eardstapa*, who, with the passage of time, has become a *snottor*. Greenfield saw the structure of the poem as consisting of an introduction by the poet (1-7); a central episode recounting the adventures and lamentations

⁵ *Literature of the Anglo-Saxons* (Princeton, 1949), pp. 158-59.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 159-60.

⁷ "The *Wanderer*: Theme and Structure," *JEGP*, XLII (1943), 526.

of the Wanderer, and his resulting "negative *de consolatione*" (8-110); and a conclusion by the poet which "supplements" the introduction by expressing the Christian moral to be derived from the essentially pagan central episode (111-15).⁸

Lumiansky's interpretation differs from Greenfield's on two major points—points which are all-important in the development of what has come to be the most generally acceptable interpretation of the poem. First, Lumiansky denies that any part of the poem need necessarily be regarded as pagan; he argues that the poem as a whole is representative not of a pagan "negative *de consolatione*," but of a positive Christianized conception of Boethian philosophy, with its inevitable emphasis on the consolation to be derived from true felicity in this earthly life. Secondly, he regards the structure of the poem as consisting not of an introduction, a central episode, and a conclusion, but of a single dramatic monologue, "wholly Christian in tone," in which the *anhaga* of the first line contrasts throughout the entire poem "the folly of emphasis on earthly things with the wisdom of emphasis on Heaven."⁹

The trend of criticism which has thus come more and more to view "The Wanderer" as having both a unified structure and a significant Christian theme is culminated by D. W. Robertson, Jr., who interprets the poem in terms almost of strict Christian allegory. Robertson contends that "the picture of the exile suggests at once one of the commonest of all Christian figures, the exile in the world who wanders in search of Christ, his Lord, in Jerusalem,"¹⁰ and he finds a level of Christian allegorical meaning which parallels nearly every other literal meaning at the surface level of the poem. The allegorical level itself lends to the unity of the poem, according to this theory, as well as does the structural device whereby that part of the poem which constitutes "the advice of this wise contemplative to his wayfaring and warfaring fellow Christians" is set forth not in the words of the poet, but "attributed to someone else, a man who makes vivid reference to Scripture and to the observations of another wise man, Solomon."¹¹

Probably few readers will be willing to go quite so far as Robertson and interpret "The Wanderer" in terms of strict Christian allegory. For most readers the *snottor* of line 111 of the poem will seem much more likely to be the *anhaga* and *eardstapa* of lines 1 and 6 rather than anything like an allegorical representation of Solomon. Yet certainly the poem does admit of allegorical overtones; and certainly the odds (and I think the logic as well) are all in favor of our regard-

⁸ "The Wanderer: A Reconsideration of Theme and Structure," *JEGP*, L (1951), 451-65.

⁹ With the exception, of course, of lines 5, 6, and 111, which are "necessary expository comments by the poet." "Dramatic Structure," p. 105.

¹⁰ "Historical Criticism," *English Institute Essays, 1950* (New York, 1951), p. 18.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

ing the poem at least as: (1) existing substantially as the original poet intended it; (2) representing a structurally self-contained, unified piece of work; and (3) expressing a Christian theme which is entirely in keeping with the Christian thematic matter of a great deal of other Old English literature belonging to approximately the same period. The first and third of these matters are, as I have implied, fairly generally agreed upon by now; but concerning the structural unity of the poem, possibly there may be added some further evidence which will lend additional support and emphasis to the trend of criticism that I have outlined.

Those scholars who object to viewing "The Wanderer" as being unified in structure do so primarily (and I think with some justification) on the basis of the complexities of setting which are involved in the poem. As Anderson puts the matter:

The scene changes from the sea, the principal background of the action, to a mead-hall and to a ruined building, as the dreams and fancies of the Wanderer build up one image after another. The continuity of thought in the poem is not logical, but rather that which is characteristic of idle reverie.¹²

Now if we are to regard the poem as a dramatic monologue, in which to the purpose of concluding that God's grace is achieved through faith a Wanderer laments the literal loss of his lord and kinsmen, perhaps we should emphasize more than has generally been the case the fact that in the first fifty-seven lines the Wanderer is using his own plight as a kind of isolated example of a downfall which he treats in greatly more universal terms throughout the remainder of the poem. Thus the fairly restrictive use of sea imagery in the first part of the poem is in terms of space and time expanded logically into the vast imagery of land and stone ruins in the latter part. Yet even this, I suspect, does not allay completely the feeling that there is, in spite of all explanation, some annoying inconsistency in the setting of the poem; for at the beginning we see an *anhaga*, an *eardstapa*, surrounded on every hand by images of solitude and the sea; yet at the end the picture is one in which a *snottor*, sitting *sundor æt rune*, meditates on the significance of his reflections.

Thus, if we interpret the structure of the poem as consisting of a dramatic monologue, it is somewhat difficult to explain precisely from whom, or from what, the *snottor* sits "apart," and to whom he directs the last four lines of the poem, which appear to represent his personal conclusion, his "consolation." Stated by the Wanderer directly to the reader, these last four lines constitute something of a structural inconsistency in themselves, for, as we have thus far interpreted the poem, the poet has already been established as narrator (6-7, 111), and we might logically expect anything in the way of a moral conclusion to be a part of the narrator's function.

Dealing in terms of what we might logically expect, of course, is

¹² G. B. Wood, H. A. Watts, and G. K. Anderson, *Literature of England* (New York, 1947), I, 56-57.

admittedly a tenuous position; yet the disparity itself of critical opinions on "The Wanderer" would seem ample testimony that the question of single or multiple speakers in the poem is a troublesome matter. At any rate, perhaps viewing the poem as a dramatic monologue does not wholly solve the structural problem either, for not only are there these seeming inconsistencies of setting to be accounted for, but a dramatic monologue, in the strictest sense, should imply the presence of a second person and should obviate the necessity of a "narrator."

If still another opinion may be advanced on the matter, then, it seems to me that there is possible an interpretation of "The Wanderer" which, so far as I am able to discover, has not yet been suggested—one which, from the standpoint of dealing with the most serious objections to viewing the poem as a unified whole, may well effect a reconciliation of some of the apparent inconsistencies which scholars have attributed to the poem.

First of all, though the distinction may be a fine one, it is probably best to regard the poem simply as a soliloquy rather than as a dramatic monologue; and we may thereby attribute all of the lines to a single speaker—the *anhaga* of the first line, who refers to himself variously, in first person and third, as *ic*, *eardstapa*, *eorl*, and *snottor on mode*. Secondly, it seems to me that the settings and actions of the poem are to be regarded not necessarily as actual ones, but rather as the imagined experiences of the speaker—a warrior who, sitting apart from his comrades, meditates philosophically upon the discrepancy between the seeming pleasures of youth and life and the inevitable destiny of old age and death. Then, just as Chaucer frames the dream vision of the *Parlement of Foules* by the statement that he has been reading in a book "a certayne thing to lerne," here the speaker frames the beginning of his reverie with the statement of a problematical matter which he intends to reflect upon:

Oft him anhaga are gebideð
metudes miltse.¹⁸ (1-2a)

After the first seven lines of the poem, in which the speaker introduces us to the situation, he projects himself into the uppermost reaches of his fancy in an attempt to discover something of the way of his God toward all mankind. First, he projects himself into the imagined situation of being an exile, sailing the seas, searching vainly for a new lord and *comitatus*—a situation which must have been a fate common enough in the *eorla lif*, and one which must have constituted one of the warrior's greatest fears. From this point on in the poem, the changes in scene and the somewhat illogical continuity of thought to which Anderson objects become significant in themselves. From this point on the episodes of the speaker's reverie are set forth

¹⁸ I quote from the *Exeter Book*, ed. Israel Gollancz, EETS, o.s., Vol. 104 (London, 1895), pp. 286-92.

in dreamlike fragments, each somewhat more expanded, somewhat more intense, than the one before, until finally the scene is one of a world in utter ruin:

Stondeð nu on laste	leofre duguþe
weal wundrum heah	wyrm-licum fah:
Eorlas fornoman	asca þryþe
wæpen wæl-gifru	wyrd seo mære
<i>and</i> þas stan-hleoðu	stormas cnyssað
hrið hreosende	hrusan bindes. . .

(97-102)

Yet this is, nevertheless, a world of pure fancy—an imagined experience from which, sitting *sundor æt rune*, the *eardstafa* may emerge a *snottor on mode*, having concluded that all earthly values are *idel weorþeð*, and that:

frofre to fæder on hefonum	wel bið þam þe him are seceð þær us eal seo fæstnung stondeð.
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(114b-115)

Thus interpreted, the fact that there appears to be no strictly logical continuity of scene or idea in the poem would now seem the height of logic itself; for in the poem the reveries of the speaker are imperfectly realized, just as in life the projection of one's self into any wholly imaginary situation must inevitably be imperfectly realized. Thus, too, even the subject matter of "The Wanderer" is subtly paralleled by its imagery, its tone, and its structure; and we may well contend that it is a considerably more skillfully wrought poem than has hitherto been supposed. By means of the introspective experience of which the central part of the poem consists, the speaker has progressed from warrior to philosopher—has been able, in other words, to place himself in what he sees as God's scheme of things, and to reach a conclusive solution to the problem with which he began: how to achieve an understanding of *metudes miltse*—God's way to man.

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MARVELL'S "NYMPH COMPLAINING FOR THE DEATH OF HER FAUN": SOURCES VERSUS MEANING

By LEO SPITZER

In the considerable literature in which attempts have been recently made to define the meaning of Marvell's poem there may be distinguished three schools of thought: one that takes literally the love of the nymph for her fawn (Legouis in his book on Marvell published thirty years ago; T. S. Eliot in his essay on Marvell; LeComte¹); a second that proposes an allegorical explanation (the fawn is Christ [Bradbrook and Thomas] or the stricken Anglican church [Douglas Bush, E. H. Emerson]); a third that attempts to reconcile these two views by admitting "religious overtones" without claiming that the "ground bass" is religious (Karina Williamson and, it seems to me, Legouis in his latest utterance: "la perte de son faon par une jeune âme religieuse"; italics mine).

In this discussion critics have analyzed mainly the vocabulary and the imagery of the poem according to its historic or stylistic provenance, with the blind faith that the origin of the images or motifs must decide implicitly the meaning of the poem. If LeComte is able to prove the pagan origin of expressions such as "nymph," "Diana's shrine," or of the central motif of the grief for a pet that has been killed (in

¹ The bibliography of this discussion may be found in the two articles by LeComte and Miss Williamson in *MP*, L (1952) and LI (1954), to which there must be added the article by E. H. Emerson and Legouis's rejoinder in *Études Anglaises*, VIII (1955), 107-12.

Needless to say, I share the outspokenly "French" horror of Legouis ("un esprit français . . . n'arrive pas à se débarrasser d'un excès de logique quand il étudie la poésie anglaise") when faced with the lack of logic implied by the assumption of allegorical explanations that explain only parts of the literary work—a procedure, now current in America, obviously based on the gratuitous belief that an allegorical explanation is in itself of higher quality than a non-allegorical one (whereas the true touchstone of any explanation is whether or not it actually "explains" convincingly and completely), a belief that in turn may represent an excessive reaction of overcompensation for traditional American qualities which have come to be felt in certain quarters as too pedestrian: good sense, matter-of-factness, realism. As for Marvell, the various ambiguities which Emerson, enthusiastically followed by some American critics, found in our poet can generally be discarded, after a close analysis, in favor of one explanation that alone fits the context. In other words, Marvell, like Góngora for whom Dámaso Alonso has found the key of understanding, is "difficult, but clear." Those poets ask from the reader the effort to make his way through the maze of ambiguities toward the unique true explanation. The critic who stops at pointing out several possible meanings has stopped halfway on the road that Marvell expected him to travel. To superimpose contemporary anarchy of meanings on Marvell's poetry is a blatant anachronism.

Ovid, Virgil,² etc.), he believes that no religious meaning is implied in the poem. If, on the contrary, Miss Williamson has located the origin of the motifs "fawn" or "feeding among lilies" in the Song of Songs,³ she is convinced that the meaning of the poem includes religious overtones.

It has been for a long time my conviction that what I would call "imagistic positivism" (the exaggerated reliance of contemporary critics on imagery to the detriment of other elements of poetry) is likely to preclude the understanding of a poem such as Marvell's in which structure, thought, psychology, must play parts at least equal to imagery. In the case of our poem, it strikes me as strange that none of the critics has analyzed this from beginning to end as a structured whole whose parts correspond to the phases of the psychological development of the Nymph. This is the more indicated since T. S. Eliot has remarked that "the suggestiveness of the poem" is "the aura around a bright clear center" (Marvel takes a "slight affair, the feeling of a girl for her pet,"⁴ and gives it a connection with that "inexhaustible and terrible nebula of emotion which surrounds all our exact and practical passions"), which remark is echoed by Miss Williamson: "The experience manifested in the poem is felt to belong to the total of human experience."

But none of these critics tells us what exactly and actually the "nebula of emotion" or the "total experience" of the Nymph who has lost her fawn is, although that nebula of total experience seems to me clearly, if discreetly, indicated in the poem. Whenever the critics think that a "slight affair" is treated with enormous seriousness of tone, either the poem cannot be good (but all critics are agreed as to the excellence of our poem), or there must be a flaw in their understanding. In a good poem form cannot go its own way, apart from content. Obviously, then, the poem is not about a "slight affair"—how could it possibly be if the end of the Nymph is that of Niobe?⁵

The protagonist of our poem is, indeed, not the fawn, but the Nymph, who dies together with the fawn, and it is quite incompre-

² But why does he not mention also the ancient and Renaissance tradition of epitaphs for pets (Catullus, Martial, Navagero, Du Bellay, Ronsard, etc.)?

³ It may be noted, however, that the comparison in the Song of Songs of the beloved with a roe or hart is not identical with Marvell's presentation of a deer as a lover: in the first case a human being is represented with the freshness, unpurposiveness, and mystery of nature; in the second, an animal in nature with the potentialities of feeling of human beings. Surely the first is a more sensuous, the second a more spiritual approach—and the second is the procedure of our metaphysical poet who is following, as we shall see later, a medieval tradition.

⁴ How does this assertion fit another, to be found later on in the article on Marvell, emphasizing the "precise taste" of Marvell's which finds for him the proper degree of seriousness for every subject which he treats?

⁵ The presence of this ancient motif has been mentioned only in passing by LeComte. Indeed, at the end of his article, when he comes to formulate pointedly the role of Marvell's Nymph, he says that if she should be given a name, it should be "Silvia rather than Pieta"—he should rather have contrasted with the Pietà the ancient equivalent of a mourning mother.

hensible why the critics have shown no curiosity as to the reason why a young girl whose pet has died should herself have chosen death. To explain this reason, my analysis will consist in simply repeating elements expressed in the poem as well as in pointing out some elements that are only slightly, but clearly, suggested in it. The delicate art of the poet has so willed it that, in the inner monologue of the Nymph that is the poem, the description of her pet reflects on her own character in indirect characterization, the increasing idealization of the fawn allowing inferences about the maiden who so idealizes it. It is the task of the commentator—a commentator who should be less a "professional" of literary criticism than a simple reader who asks relevant human questions⁶—to bring out clearly the deep tragedy of the Nymph. We are, indeed, given an indirect description of her feelings while the animal is dying (lines 1-92), after its death (93-110), and before the death of the Nymph, when she is planning the consecration by a monument to her own as well as to the fawn's memory (111-22).

The poem starts with the address of the Nymph to the fatally wounded fawn in which she reveals her, as it were, modern attitude of revulsion against the wanton slaying of a harmless animal. That this is a passage significant for the history of ideas (or feelings) has been duly noted by Legouis who devotes one and one-half pages to the rise and growth of this feeling as expressed in English literature. But I would point out two other, more personal, attitudes of the Nymph that are expressed in the first verse paragraph (1-24), both indicative of a feeling that her life has come to an end with the death of the fawn: that of evangelical forgiveness for the murderers of the pet—she does not "wish them ill," but prays for them, weeping (6-12)—and that of readiness to offer her own life as a sacrifice to the God of revenge (17-24). That this is indeed the meaning of these lines may perhaps be contested. Legouis translates (*italics mine*) :

Quand bien même ils laveront leurs mains criminelles
dans ce sang chaud qui se sépare
de ton cœur et dont la vue perce le mien,
ils ne pourraient se purifier : leur souillure
est empreinte sur eux d'une pourpre trop éclatante.
Il n'y a pas au monde un autre animal
semblable qu'ils puissent offrir pour racheter leur péché.

But if "this warm life-blood" were that of the fawn "which doth part / From thine" (understood as "thy heart," with "heart" taken from the following "wound me to the heart"), this anticipative ellipsis would seem rather difficult. More important, however, how should we understand that the criminals who killed the fawn would

⁶ We have indeed come to the point where the quiet de-humanized professional of literary criticism considers it his duty to deal with "imagery" and similar specialized, technical, or philological questions, to the exclusion of the human element which is at the bottom of all poetry and consequently should inform philology, the humanistic science.

think, in order to become guiltless, of washing their bloody hands in the blood of their victim (would Lady Macbeth wash off her guilt in King Duncan's blood)? And how would the lines 23-24 which obviously allude to a sacrificial offering (*a deodand*) connect with the preceding lines, especially if "such another" meant an animal, as Legouis has it: in the preceding lines there was to be found only an allusion to criminals who wish to wash off their guilt.

Thus I am led to believe that in "this warm life-blood" the pronoun *this* represents the first person ("my") and means the warm blood of the Nymph who would wish to redeem (a new Iphigenia, as LeComte has seen) the spilt blood of the fawn, though to no avail for its murderers whose "stain" is irremovable.⁷ With this explanation the lines "There is not such another in / The World to offer for their Sin" connect excellently with the thought of the preceding passage: "no other *being* (including me) could atone for that unique fawn." What strikes us here is that at the moment of the fawn's death the Nymph is already considering her own death, a death of expiation which she, however, seems to reject at this time because of her unworthiness. Thus this first part of the poem must be interpreted not only in the light of the history of ideas, but as a story of an extraordinary human being, the Nymph.

What this story has been we learn from the second paragraph (lines 25-36): it is the story of her love for Sylvio who betrayed her. We notice that between Sylvio and the troopers there exists a certain analogy (the vocatives *inconstant Sylvio—ungentle men*, underline this parallelism): both acted wantonly, cruelly, regardless of the "smart" of the girl; both killed, the one her young loving heart, the others the young object of her later love. Sylvio's frivolity appears in the words with which he accompanies his gifts, the fawn and the silver chain: "look how your Huntsman here / Hath taught a Faun to hunt his *Dear*"—words that made a deep impression on her at the time, but which gained an even stronger significance after Sylvio's breach of faith, as is indicated by the elaborate manner in which she reports these words:

One morning (I remember well)
... nay and I know
What he said then; I'me sure I do.
Said He ...

These simple words and this simple syntax carry a sense of convincingness and sincerity. What is more, the repetitious phrasing seems to imply that the maiden, even now, must make an effort not to wince at the hurting quality which those words still contain. She realizes, of course, in retrospect, that Sylvio spoke as a "huntsman"

⁷ "This warm life-blood, which doth part / From thine" must then mean "which now departs [must depart] from thy life-blood"; "and wound me to the Heart" belongs rather together with "Though they should wash their guilty hands" (if they should wash . . . and wound me . . . , that is, kill me).

who saw the fawn in the light of his huntsmanship (as an animal trained to "hunt his *Dear*," to pursue her, frolic around her) and that she herself was for Sylvio the huntsman nothing but a quarry or a plaything.

Thus in his words, she now realizes, fate had spoken. What should we think of the puns in this passage (*dear—deer, heart—hart*)? They seem practically superfluous, but they are probably intended to characterize the ambiguous atmosphere of "huntsman's frivolity" which is proper to Sylvio's adventures.⁸ The sober significance of lines 25-36 is that the early experience of the Nymph who suffered from her lover's faithlessness must be seen together with the love which will develop between her and the fawn: the one conditions the other. There is also an indication of a parallelism in the Nymph's and the animal's fate: both fall prey to wanton, cruel men. Although the Nymph's feelings for Sylvio are worded in a simple, untragic manner ("smart" is the only word that allows us to measure her grief), we may assume that a deep wound has existed in her since the time of Sylvio's betrayal.

There apparently followed upon the adventure with Sylvio, as the third paragraph suggests (37-46), a respite from grief, respite from deep feeling, in which the playful animal helped the Nymph to forget. The fawn meant to her first relaxation, a "content" in "idleness": the sportive nimbleness of the fawn invited her to the "game" of racing, of "hunting." But with the lines "it seem'd to bless / Its self in me" a new note is sounded. The happiness enjoyed by the animal in her company, within her atmosphere, could not be depicted more graphically than by the surprising reflexive use of the English verb "to bless" that I may translate by the Italian *barsi* (which has a relation to *beato, beatitudine*, similar to that of *to bless oneself to bliss*). The fawn "called itself blessed," "found its delight, happiness, bliss in her."

Strangely enough, Miss Williamson has failed to list this extraordinary use of the verb "to bless" among the expressions with "religious overtones." It is first attested in 1611 in the biblical passage (Jeremiah 4:2): *the nations shall bless themselves in him* [sc. God]. The pivotal line "it seem'd to bless / Its self in me" with its solemn (as if religious) ring marks the first sign of true love⁹ that came to the

⁸ The puns may be considered within the framework of the other examples of metaphysical wit to be found in our poem and also within the framework of other puns to be found in the poetry of Marvell and Marvell's contemporaries. But, believing as I do that any stylistic device is an empty form which may be filled by most divers contents, I should prefer to treat each manifestation of wit, puns, etc., *in situ*, in the precise situation in which it appears. It is the juncture of a particular *significandum* and *significatum* that gives precise meaning to any stylistic device (as well as to any linguistic utterance). Consequently, I feel entitled to treat the puns of the passage just mentioned separately from the other examples of wit which we shall find in our poem.

⁹ It must be noted that in the episode which, according to LeComte, constitutes the model of our poem, Virgil's *Aeneid* VII, 475 (Sylvio's stag wounded by Ascanius; cf. also the story of Cyparissus in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* X, 106, which is an imitation of the Virgilian passage), we find as the only active person

Nymph and asked from her the response of love. The wording of the next lines, again very simple and truly convincing, "How could I less / Than love it? / O I cannot be / Unkind," sounds apologetic: the Nymph herself feels the momentum of the totally unexpected, sudden inner development. The Nymph who had experienced inconstancy and frivolity in love has now received a new revelation, that of pure, unsolicited, gratuitously, unselfishly offered, abiding love that developed imperceptibly, gradually, out of gaiety and playfulness (the even flow of the lines in question mirrors this development).

But, as the next paragraph (47-54) shows, the Nymph, even at the moment of the fawn's death, is still not quite prepared to believe that the revelation of true love that was imparted to her was final: "Had it liv'd long" might the fawn not have developed into another Sylvio? (We infer from the lingering comparison and from the lingering doubt even at this moment how deeply wounded by her first experience the Nymph still is.) But no, she is now assured that the fawn's love "was far more than the love of false and cruel men" ("cruel" being a word used by her now when she is able to compare Sylvio and the fawn).

The next three paragraphs (55-92), the last of which ends with the line "Had it liv'd long" that gives the answer to the question voiced there, are inspired by an ever-growing sureness about the significance of her love. In these paragraphs Sylvio is finally forgotten, yet some of the Nymph's statements suggest to the reader the contrast between then and now:

It is a wond'rous thing, how fleet
'Twas on those little silver feet.
With what a pretty skipping grace,
It oft would challenge me the Race:
And when 't had left me far away,
'Twould stay, and run again, and stay.
For it was nimbler much than Hindes;
And trod, as on the four Winds.

We may contrast the fawn's "silver feet" with the "silver chain" given by Sylvio: now there is no need for a chain, since the fawn, more faithful than Sylvio, though it leaves the maiden temporarily, always returns to her, leaves her playfully to return faithfully.

The commentators who point out that lines 67-69 may be inspired by Pliny and the expression "trod, as on the four Winds" by the Psalmist, have missed the main point: the contrast between the nimbleness given to the animal by nature and its unfailing conscientious

the mistress who tames her stag and takes loving care of him ("soror omni Silvia cura / mollibus intexens ornabat cornua sertis / pectebatque ferum puroque in fonte lavabat"; cf. in Ovid: "tu [Cyparissus] pubula cervum / ad nova, tu liquidi ducebas fontis ad undam, / tu nodo texebas varios per cornua flores . . ."). With Marvell it is the fawn who has the active part: it is he, already trained by Sylvio, who by his loving behavior makes his mistress love him. And, of course, there can be no question in Virgil or Ovid of the animal becoming superior to its mistress.

returnings to its mistress (note the repeated *stay* in Marvell's wording and the repeated *fuga* in Pliny: with the latter, the stag runs—stays—runs; with the former it stays—runs—stays). When we read lines such as "It oft would challenge me the Race," we realize—and perhaps the Nymph realized it too at that point of her "Complaint"—that the fickle hunter's definition of the fawn has unexpectedly come true, only in another sense than was meant by him: the fawn has been trained to "hunt *Sylvio's Dear*," to hunt her "constantly."

The reader will note the lavish use of metaphysical wit in these paragraphs which are intended to extol the fawn's virtues and its beauty, qualities that become more and more of a supernatural kind as they transcend the Nymph's own virtues and beauty. The description proceeds by comparison (or identification) of these virtues and beauties with those of other objects and beings in which they are traditionally embodied in undefiled purity. The fawn was nourished with milk and sugar by the fingers of the maiden—it became more white and sweet than this food (it acquires, in addition, sweet fragrance¹⁰) and its feet more soft and white than her (or any lady's) hand; it lies in a bed of lilies and feeds on roses (so that its mouth will seem to bleed)—had it lived longer, it could have become "Lillies without, Roses within."

This sequence of images which climaxes in this last "witty" identification may have its origin in the Song of Songs, but its function here is the metamorphosis of the animal into a paragon of virtues that are not found combined even in a human being: the coolness of virginal chastity and the flame of ardent love (the rose being the symbol of the latter—witness the fawn's rose-kiss that seems to come from a bleeding heart). Wit, which here, as always with Marvell, has a functional role, suggests the possibility of a miracle: the possibility of moral or spiritual qualities becoming sensuously perceptible as though they were objects in outward nature in a καλοκάγαθία of their own. A miracle is after all nothing but the substantiation of the supernatural.¹¹

Here I may permit myself a digression about metaphysical wit in general. In T. S. Eliot's statements on this subject (espoused by Miss Williamson) one feels a certain embarrassment, as though he,

¹⁰ For Miss Williamson this is an echo of the Song of Songs: "his lips like sweet lilies, dropping sweet myrrh . . . his mouth is most sweet." But I find in the epitaph of the French Renaissance poet Du Bellay on the dog Peloton (in *Divers jeux rustiques*) the lines:

Peloton ne mangeoit pas
de la chair à son repas:
ses viandes plus prises,
c'estoient miettes brisees,
que celuy qui le paissait
de ses doigts amollissait:
aussi sa bouche estoit pleine
toujours d'une douce haleine.

¹¹ On the contrary "poetic miracles" performed by a Marino have, it seems to me, no supernatural connotations: with him the transformation is from one

who appreciates so highly seventeenth-century wit, had not reached a description quite satisfactory to himself, when, after having set wit (but not entirely) apart from "erudition" and "cynicism," he writes the final sentence: "It involves, probably [!], a recognition, implicit in the expression of every experience, of the other experiences which are possible" (and this is basically the same idea as that, quoted above, on the "slight affair," supposedly treated in our poem, to which the poet would have added that "inexhaustible and terrible nebula of emotion" that surrounds all our "exact and practical passions").

But such a description of wit seems to me far too general: would the metaphysical poet add any other experience to the one he is treating?¹² Marvell envisages a metamorphosis of the fawn into lilies and roses, a very precise change related to its way of living, not some vague connection with, or nebula of, "other experiences." His metamorphosis seems to me based on a public belief in miracles whereby a supernatural development may not only become physically perceptible in beautiful forms, but may live a physical life of its own according to a precise pattern of psychological analogy. The fawn who lies in a bed of lilies and feeds on roses (that is, is pure as the lily and embodies, like the rose, the flame of love) may become lilies and roses because organic beings may, in a sort of mythological metabolism, become what they eat.

This is, of course, a miracle of the poet's making, but one that goes back historically¹³ to medieval religious beliefs, according to which

sensuous object to another, more perfect in its sensuous beauty. To choose an example, parallel to Marvell, in which a comparison between animal and human body is involved:

Mentre Lidia premea
dentro rustica coppa
a la lanuta la feconda poppa,
i' stava a rimirar doppio candore,
di natura e d'amore;
nè distinguer sapea
il bianco umor da le sue mani intatte,
ch'altro non discerneva che latte in latte.

Thanks to the alchemy of *amore*, the white hand of the beloved becomes milk (milk that encompasses milk)—an entirely sensuous miracle.

¹² Probably Eliot's description was prompted by the lines of Cowley on wit which he quotes:

In a true piece of Wit all things must be
Yet all things there agree . . .
Or as the primitive forms of all
(If we compare great things with small)
Which, without discord or confusion, lie
In that strange mirror of the Deity.

It seems to me that Father Ong was better inspired when, quoting the same lines of Cowley, he considered as a secondary result of a poetry that moves on higher and lower planes at the same time, what he calls the "omnivorousness" which enables wit poetry "to devour all sorts of experience in one gulp," "to digest all experience, raw if necessary, and make something of it."

¹³ This historical succession has been proved by Father W. J. Ong, S.J., in his classical article, "Wit and Mystery: A Revaluation in Medieval Latin Hymnody" (*Speculum*, XXII [1947], 310 ff.), who attests wit (including puns,

the spirituality of saints and martyrs acted in similar analogy on the physical world. Metaphysical wit has here simply laicized, and preserved in poetry, the substantiation of the supernatural current in hagiographic legend. To give but one example, borrowed from Curtius' *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (appendix on "comic spirit in hagiography") : St. Lawrence, when grilled over the flames, is reported by St. Ambrose to have said to his torturers: *assum est, versa et manduca* "my body is cooked, turn it to the other side and eat it"—the underlying idea being that the saint's supernatural fortitude was able to triumph over physical pain to the point that he could accept, in its most extreme form, the transformation of his flesh into meat to which, then, all the normal culinary procedures (the mechanics of cooking) and pleasures (the eating—which here becomes anthropophagy) may be applied, while his mind remains miraculously intact (able to formulate the physical miracle).

The comic spirit in hagiography is probably at the bottom of metaphysical wit. Just as, according to Bergson, all comic effect is a result of mechanization of the organic, in the process of living flesh becoming meat we are faced with a mechanization of a spiritual force—whose comic effect is, of course, different from other comic writing, surrounded as it is, at least for the believer, with awe. Some of this quasi-religious comic spirit or awesome wit (poetry being, as is so often the case, the reenactment in secularized form of ancestral beliefs) is also present in Marvell's suggestion that the animal lying among lilies and feeding on roses may become all lilies and roses. Here the poetic miracle has inherited from the truly religious miracle its paradoxical logic, its psycho-physical analogy, and the mechanization of the spiritual (there is no "cynicism" involved in such a transfer).

The extension of the originally religious wit to secular subject matter¹⁴ may have been encouraged by certain genres of pagan poetry

paradoxes, etc.) in the hymns of Prudentius, Thomas Aquinas, Adam of St. Victor, used as a device to express certain paradoxical mysteries inherent in the Christian dogma (for example, the Tri-une Godhead). One facet of the same procedure is what I am treating here: wit expressing miracles, the miracle being different from the mystery in that the former constitutes a temporary interruption of the so-called laws of nature while the religious mystery is above those laws or underlying them.

The historical fact, stated by Eliot, that poetry of wit is absent from eighteenth- and nineteenth-century poetry may be explained in the same manner as the disappearance of allegory in those same centuries. At that time belief in the concrete reality of abstract qualities of perfection had become lost while previous centuries had retained from earlier medieval thought the capacity of thinking, at least poetically, of shapes into which perfection is able to materialize. In allegorical poetry abstractions assume a body; in poetry of wit abstract qualities concretize themselves in objects. With a renascence in the twentieth century of abstract thought, as a reaction against the overcrowding material world, poetry of wit has been reinstated.

¹⁴ What is called in English "metaphysical wit" is called in French *préciosité*, although the realization of this identity has not yet found its way into orthodox French literary history. The usual definition given for *précieux* passages: "une

that were revived in modern poetry, for instance, by the Ovidian metamorphosis: for the change of the fawn into lilies and roses is nothing but an Ovidian imagination. With Ovid such a metamorphosis would fancifully explain, according to a mythical, that is pre-scientific, science of analogy, the birth of an object or being in nature by means of a legendary event that once befell a human being (the cypress was originally the youth Cyparissus, the laurel was originally the nymph Daphne), the underlying idea being one of pantheism which "sees a nymph behind every tree." Certain analogies obtain between the form of the object in nature and the human situation that gave birth to it. With Ovid the change of forms is from the human to the non-human, the latter being anthropomorphosized. When the Christian spirit moves the medieval and the Renaissance poets, their metamorphosis will emphasize the superhuman that is present in the physical: we will remember the medieval tradition (not lost in the Renaissance) of *Ovide moralisé* which will give to the pagan metamorphosis Christian religious or moral overtones (cf. the *Romans de la Dame à la Lycorne* mentioned below in note 15).

Thus Marvell's wit in our poem is located at the point of confluence of two powerful literary currents, Ovidian and Christian—no wonder that modern classifications of our poem, now as pagan, now as Christian, do violence to one-half of its inspiration since it participates in both currents. We shall find, in harmony with that Protean quality, inherited from Ovid, of poetry of wit, or its "omnivorousness," as Father Ong calls its ability "to attract into its orbit experiences on most various levels provided that they are brought together with a higher meaning"—we shall find in our poem several other examples of wit, of psycho-physical analogy and change of forms particularly in the scenes of the death and the after-life of the fawn.

The death of the fawn (93-100) is surrounded by an atmosphere of beauty and virtue combined in a miracle. It is the death of a "saint" who, in spite of his "calm," is accessible to human emotions to the point of shedding tears, tears of farewell to love (as it appears from the comparison with the tears of the "brotherless *Heliades*"). And the tears will become beautiful substances: wit will compare them, in their fragrance and visual beauty, with "gumme," "frankincense," and "amber" (the last of which, suggested by Ovid's metamorphosis of the sisters of Phaëthon, has probably given the impulse

métaphore poussée jusqu'au bout" (*il en rougit, le traître*, said of a dagger; *brûlé de plus de feux que je n'en allumai*, said of a lover) would seem to suggest a futile automatic game, while in reality the "metaphor pushed to its extreme" originates in France as elsewhere in religious poetry (*La Cépède*, *D'Aubigné*, etc.) and has, even in its better known secular variety, inherited something of that "miraculous psycho-physical parallelism" that is characteristic of the belief in the efficacy of spiritual forces. In that poetic world there exists a blushing of shame that may become indistinguishable from blood, a love whose flame is more consuming than actual fires multiplied.

to the series of analogies).¹⁵ It is the acme of metaphysical wit that the liquid substances into which the tears of the fawn have been changed can themselves be presented anthropomorphically: "So weeps the wounded Balsome." In the world of poetic identification of opposites the road between human being and thing may be traveled in both directions. The final identification of the flowing tears with solid amber suggested to the poet a further "substantification" of the tears of the animal, their congealing into "two crystals" (each representing one eye of the fawn), a jewel, as it were, a thing of beauty that will forever preserve the essence of the transient moment of the fawn's death, a pagan relic to be offered in a golden vial (which should also contain the Nymph's tears, that are less "crystallized" and "overflow" its brim) to Diana's shrine. It is only at this moment and by this gesture that our realization that the destiny of the fawn and of its mistress is one and the same becomes final. Both being too sublime for this world of wantonness and cruelty, both victims of their own purity, they belong together forever like their tears that will be preserved in the shrine of chastity.

In the whole description of her relationship with the living animal the Nymph has kept herself in the background, minimizing the depth of her feeling and indeed comparing herself disadvantageously with the animal (she "blushed" at its whiteness). Even in death the white fawn will transcend her: for while her own final destiny is not mentioned, she is assured that he will dwell in Elysium with the other white animals that embody purity. The animal that has "stayed" with

¹⁵ The coupling of Christian with pagan elements, which I mentioned above as characteristic of our poem, is reflected by the outspoken reference to a metamorphosis of Ovid (*the Heliades*) following immediately after the expression "holy frankincense" which points to Christian church service.

The lack of nuances in the poetic sensibility of those critics who decide for an "either-or" in our poem may be explained in part by their unfamiliarity with medieval lay poetry that combines the worldly and the unworldly to a degree unbelievable for us moderns; for instance, in the fourteenth-century French *Roman de la Dame à la Lycorne et du Chevalier au Lyon*, we find the story of the love of a noble lady, who is a paragon of virtue and grace, for a courageous and virtuous knight. This story is replete with romantic adventures à la Chrétien de Troyes of one of whose heroes the knight riding on a lion is reminiscent —while the *dame à la lycone* rides the unicorn which equals her in virtue (ed. Gennrich, lines 183 ff.):

... par ce qu'est [la dame] de tout bien affinée
Jhesu Christ volt, que li fust destinee
Une merveille, que chi vus conteraï:
Cest d'une bieste, que *Dies* donna l'otrai,
Et tel franchise e si tres grant purté
Il li donna, qu'ele avoit en vilte
Tous vilains visces . . .
Pource donna a la dame tel don
Li Dies d'Amours, que tous temps avoit non:
"La dame blanche qui la Lycone garde,"
Qui oñ nul temps de mal faire ne tarde.

Here then, in a medieval secular, if moralizing, love story, it is Christ and Amor who give to the perfect lady the animal that, in bestiaries and tapestries alike, was thought to embody Christ. The evidently present "religious overtones" do not guarantee the presence of a religious poem.

her (faithfully) is asked not "to run too fast" toward Elysium (109)—a graceful conceit: even in death the deer will preserve its natural fleetness. And even in the monument to be erected after her death the figure of the fawn will be of "alabaster" that never can be "as white as thee," but whiter than the "marble" that will perpetuate her own figure. While the relationship between mistress and animal will be expressed by the position of the fawn's image at her feet (just as on medieval tombstones traditionally faithful dogs lie at the feet of their masters), the mistress will remain forever the human mourner rather than the traditional owner. The Nymph will become a Niobe,¹⁶ endowed, if not with the boastfulness, with the disconsolate feelings of that "unhappy" mother. Her evolution which began with simple delight and enjoyment of a graceful young being, after having reached the depth of true love, ends in the grief of a bereaved mother. Her tears (that overflow all boundaries) will petrify into the statue that weeps, that is "engraved" by her tears: the two aspects of grief, the feeling of numbness and of dissolution, are brought together in the image of the stone-that-weeps.¹⁷

This tragic story could be called in modern (Freudian) terms one of frustration overcome by sublimation¹⁸—and as such it would verge on comedy, replacement of love for a person by love for an animal (the stock situation in which old spinsters are involved) coming dangerously close to the grim caricature of Flaubert's *Un cœur simple*. But Marvell has placed this story of disillusionment within a baroque setting of sad beauty,¹⁹ a metamorphosis of ancient tradition being overlaid by the feeling for the transiency of things earthly.

¹⁶ Niobe was killed by the arrows of the two children of Leto whom she had offended, Apollo and Diana—we may surmise that it was Diana who killed Marvell's Nymph out of pity for her fate.

¹⁷ We witness here the paradoxical coupling of two opposite attitudes as before when "cold virginity" and "ardent love" were found combined in the fawn. Already in Ovid, *Metamorphoses VI*, 303 ff., we find:

Deriguitque malis . . .
 . . . intra quoque viscera saxum est:
Flet tamen . . .
 . . . et lacrimis etiam nunc marmora manant.

But the "witty" idea of the statue being "sculptured" by the Nymph's tears belongs, of course, to Marvell.

¹⁸ In Gottfried of Strassburg's medieval romance *Tristan und Isold* we have perhaps a story reminiscent of that of Marvell, though leading to a quite different conclusion. With Gottfried, the absent Tristram, thinking faithfully of Isold and reflecting how he could relieve her loneliness, sends her the graceful dog, Petitcreü, a dog possessed of miraculous qualities, about whose neck is hung on a chain a bell with a tone so sweet that all who hear it forget their grief. But Isold, unwilling to forget her grief while Tristram is unable to forget his own, finally decides to tear the marvelous bell from the chain of the dog—which thereby loses immediately its miraculous power. By parallel wording the poet emphasizes the exemplary behavior of these two faithful lovers who refuse consolation: Tristram "who has given up his joy and his life to grief . . ."—Isold "the faithful, constant one who has given up her life to longing and to Tristram."

¹⁹ Another baroque combination of sadness and beauty consists in presentation of the beauty of the world as undermined by transiency (the motif of *sic transit gloria mundi*).

The *lacrimae rerum* are made to crystallize into things of beauty that commemorate tragedy (the statue, the crystals in the golden vial), just as in another, typically baroque and conceptual, poem of Marvell's, disillusionment becomes beauty, tears become jewels:

What in the world most fair appears,
Yea, even Laughter, turns to tears;
And all the Jewels which we prize
Melt in these pendants of the Eyes.

We understand now the particular tone of our "Complaint" in which the protagonist tells her story in an "inner monologue" of rather simple, direct words which contrast with the sophisticated examples of metaphysical wit.²⁰ This stylistic contrast reflects the inner contrast between sadness and beauty: the sadness of disillusionment is reflected convincingly by the simple speech, not unknown to Marvell, while the miraculous metamorphosis into sensuous beauty finds its expression in the mirages of wit.²¹

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²⁰ To that rather modern technique belong those temporal elements in the spoken complaint that mark the passing of time ("The wanton Troopers . . . Have shot my Faun"; "Oh help! o help! I see it faint"; "Now my Sweet Faun is vanish'd"; "for I Will but bespeak thy Grave"). It may very well be that the second passage just quoted reflects the *auxilium vocat* of Silvia in the *Aeneid*, but Marvell has fitted it into the, as it were, temporal economy of the "Complaint."

²¹ After having handed in this article to the *MLQ*, I read a study of our poem by D. C. Allen, published in *ELH*, XXIII (June, 1956). I am pleased to note that he considers the fawn a *surrogatus amoris*, but he fails to follow through in detail the development of the motif in the poem and rather concentrates on the history of the *topoi* that went into its composition (without mentioning, however, the—for me essential—parallel of Niobe).

CONRAD'S REVISIONS OF *THE SECRET AGENT* A STUDY IN LITERARY IMPRESSIONISM

By HAROLD E. DAVIS

In his book *Romance and Tragedy in Joseph Conrad*, Walter F. Wright compares at some length two versions of *The Secret Agent*—the serial and the revised novel—showing in considerable detail the way in which Conrad elaborated upon his original conception.¹ Wright's purpose, however, is the elucidation of theme in the novel; he is not much concerned with such technical points as specific changes in style or method. But, although his study is complete and invaluable in explaining important aspects of the theme, there still remain many interesting technical changes which will bear a close examination because of the insight they show into Conrad's general methods. This is particularly true for *The Secret Agent*, because Conrad placed much importance upon the sordid tale of the futile Greenwich outrage. His letters show an unusual energy exerted in justifying some of the criticisms leveled at the novel and play; and he speaks of the novel, in the 1920 preface, as a "perfectly genuine piece of work" which gave him "one of the minor satisfactions of my writing life."²

The tragedy of the corpulent agent Verloc went through three separate versions, although the basic plot is the same in all three: the serial, which appeared in *Ridgeway's Militant Weekly*—a brief-lived and somewhat sensational American magazine—from October 6, 1906, to December 15, 1906; the expanded novel, published in 1907; and the play, written early in 1920 and produced (a commercial failure) in November, 1922. The nucleus of the narrative, the unsuccessful attempt to bomb Greenwich Observatory (an event never directly narrated in any of the three versions), was, according to the preface, suggested by an "omniscient friend" whom Ford Madox Ford later identified as himself in *Return to Yesterday*.³

The general effect of the revision from serial to novel is one of expansion: at least one whole chapter (X) is inserted, the closing scenes are more than twice the original length, and page after page of descriptive details are added. As Wright has shown, the theme is considerably strengthened. Winnie's maternal passion for her idiot

¹ (Lincoln, Nebraska, 1949), pp. 174-97.

² Preface to *The Secret Agent*, p. xiii. All page references in the text are to the Medallion Edition of the *Complete Works of Joseph Conrad* (London, 1925), although the pagination in most of the standard editions is the same.

³ (London, 1931), p. 111.

brother Stevie receives greater emphasis, the characters of the Assistant Commissioner and Winnie's aged mother are more fully realized, and Verloc's blind insensitivity to Winnie's love for Stevie is much more clearly underlined. But in addition there is a technical similarity in the changes, evidence that Conrad was aware of a need for improving, in a specific direction, the style, the atmosphere, and the whole emotional depth of the material. These revisions, many of which are additions, fit the same pattern: they sharpen and fill in the bare action by an enlargement and clarification of the mood and background. This is done most frequently by rendering the details exactly instead of reporting them, the basic tenet of literary impressionism as Ford, James, and Crane defined it. The details are allowed to suggest the mood; they imply, rather than state, the feeling which the reader should receive.

Ford Madox Ford's suggestion of the subject was, in all probability, only a part of his contribution to the novel. The *Ridgeway* serial and the novel were written during the years in which Conrad and Ford collaborated fairly closely and—if we can accept Ford's sometimes unreliable literary memory—endlessly discussed the skills of writing. The exact extent to which Ford actually contributed to the writing of *The Secret Agent* would be impossible to determine, but Ford does indicate that he played some physical part: "A little of *The Secret Agent* was written by me, sentences here and there, mostly about the topography of Western London—which Conrad did not know at all—and details about policemen and anarchists."⁴ However, what is perhaps more important is that Ford's "method" of impressionism can be seen constantly at work in Conrad's revisions of the serial. This is not to say that the method was exclusively Ford's or even that Ford acted in anything but an advisory capacity in Conrad's use of it. *Nostromo*, surely a mature technical achievement, was written three years earlier, and Flaubert, de Maupassant, James, and Crane before Ford were all in their own ways the real giants of literary impressionism. It is true that a great many of the devices used in *The Secret Agent* were those which Ford recommends in his discussions of technique, and these Conrad found successful enough to repeat in later novels.

In an essay entitled "Techniques," Ford speaks of Stephen Crane and gives a specific example of Crane's use of "the method":

But it was perhaps Crane of all that school or gang—and not excepting Maupassant—who most observed that canon of Impressionism: "you must render: never report." You must never, that is to say, write: "He saw a man aim a gat at him"; you must put it: "He saw a steel ring directed at him."⁵

There are many short examples in *The Secret Agent* of changes which bring the object or description into a more precise reality. Conrad is continually sharpening his style by pinning down the subject to a

⁴ *Return to Yesterday*, p. 194.

⁵ *Southern Review*, I (July, 1935), 31.

concrete existence. In Chapter I, the fireworks of Stevie's escapade, "rockets, catherine wheels, detonating squibs," are revised to "fierce rockets, angry catherine wheels, loudly exploding squibs." In the same section Winnie receives a "sort of explanation" from Stevie; in the novel it is "a misty and confused confession." The lackey who greets Verloc at the Embassy wears, in the serial, a "clawhammer coat edged with gold cord," which is changed to one "edged with thin yellow cord." There are many other such changes following the same direction: "lonely gas-jet" to "flaring gas-jet"; "thin lips" to "thin, livid lips"; "a thin streak of gas-light" to "a narrow, clear streak of gas-light"; "that bus" to "that green bus"; "a pack of hungry bloodhounds" to "a pack of hungry black hounds." In each case the change has peaked the impression, caught it much more exactly.

Another kind of change which demonstrates the same need to render more precisely is what might be termed an "adding on" process. In his revision Conrad rarely discards any of the developed descriptive passages or specific figures used in the serial. Nearly all of the similes, metaphors, images, are retained word for word, but they are often added to, rounded into a fuller and more vivid perception. In his book on Conrad, Ford quotes a passage from *The Inheritors* to illustrate the specific words written by Conrad and those by himself. The narrator-protagonist of the novel is passing through a crowded hallway. Conrad's words are in italics.

Half sentences came to our ears from groups that passed us: *A very old man with a nose that almost touched his thick lips was saying: "Shot himself.... Through the left temple.... Mon Dieu!"*⁶

Ford's cryptic scene is filled in by Conrad, bringing an immediacy, a living force, into the action. And it is just this sort of filling in of the black and white outlines with colors that makes up much of the more than 28,000 words added in *The Secret Agent*. Another example is in the extended flashback which goes through the Assistant Commissioner's mind as he talks with Heat in Chapter VI. The section is used to introduce the Assistant Commissioner's influential lady friend and patroness of the ex-convict Michaelis as they talk at a reception in the old lady's drawing room. Michaelis appears, and his pitiable condition shocks the medley of aristocrats, politicians, and artists who throng the room "seated or standing in the light of six tall windows." After his departure, there is a murmur of sympathetic comments and then an added passage very much like that previously quoted from *The Inheritors*:

Other voices, as if glad of the opening, murmured hasty compassion. "Quite startling," "Monstrous," "Most painful to see." The lank man, with the eye-glass on a broad ribbon, pronounced mincingly the word "Grotesque," whose justness was appreciated by those standing near him. They smiled at each other. (110)

⁶ Joseph Conrad: *A Personal Remembrance* (London, 1924), p. 138.

It is an exact person (with the eyeglass) who speaks seemingly casual words in passing, words which nail down both a vital attitude in the novel and the character expressing it.

During Verloc's harrowing interview with Vladimir in Chapter II the harassed agent proudly goes to the Embassy window to demonstrate his "meeting" voice; Vladimir follows him and looks out of the window. The scene is presented in this way, with the later additions in italics: "and below, across the courtyard of the Embassy, well beyond the open gate, could be seen the broad back of a policeman *watching idly the gorgeous perambulator of a wealthy baby being wheeled in state across the Square*" (23). The scene is relatively unimportant in terms of the plot—if it is fair to think of any detail as unimportant in such a tightly packed novel—but Conrad was unwilling to let pass the opportunity to catch a fleeting impression.

Verloc is a much more profound psychological study in the novel; at several places Conrad renders more exactly his precise mood and attitude, doing so by suggestion, by skillfully describing his physical actions so that his mental state is clear. Verloc is depressed at feeling his security threatened (additions in italics): he "sat still with downcast eyes, looking at the piece of cheese on his plate for a whole minute" (176). He is fearful when he finds that the Assistant Commissioner has been to the shop to see him: "Mr. Verloc obeyed woodenly, stony-eyed, and like an automaton *whose face had been painted red*. And this resemblance to a mechanical figure went so far that he had an automaton's absurd air of being aware of the machinery inside him" (197). Verloc is indecisive and confused before he leaves the shop with the Assistant Commissioner: "No! No!" protested Mr. Verloc, busy fishing for his hat. *But when he got it from under the sofa he held it as if he did not know the use of a hat*" (199).

Ossipon, the tawdry opportunist, is characterized and his grasping nature symbolized in much the same fashion early in the novel when the anarchists hold a meeting in Verloc's shop: "Seated in front of the fireplace, Comrade Ossipon, ex-medical student, the principal writer of the F. P. leaflets, stretched out his robust legs, keeping the soles of his boots turned up to the glow in the grate" (44).

The handling of minor characters was an aspect of "the method" which Ford considered very important. He praises Conrad's skill in this respect, saying that he "never introduced a character, however subsidiary, without providing that character with ancestry and hereditary characteristics, or at least with home surroundings."¹ Even the most minor of characters must in some way be exactly delineated, for like other apparently unimportant details, he must be fitted into the pattern which the novel is trying to form. There are only a few minor characters added to the novel—a policeman, the

¹ Joseph Conrad, p. 206.

charwoman Mrs. Neale—but they are made concrete, as much so as if they had been provided a genealogy. The cabdriver who drives Winnie, Stevie, and Winnie's heroic mother to the old woman's new home appears in the serial, but he is only a shade; in the novel he is seen as he "turned slowly his bloated and sodden face of many colours bristling with white hairs. His little red eyes glistened with moisture. His big lips had a violet tint. They remained closed. With the dirty back of his whip-hand he rubbed the stubble sprouting on his enormous chin" (157). And there is Mrs. Neale, who is not in the serial at all: "Red armed, and aproned in coarse sacking up to the arm pits, she exhaled the anguish of the poor in a breath of soap-suds and rum, in the uproar of scrubbing, in the clatter of tin pails" (180). She is used also to adumbrate Stevie's sensitivity to suffering, for she learns that an occasional groan for "the benefit of her infant children" will draw from Stevie the shilling he is allowed by Winnie.

In the serial there is a break immediately after Winnie's realization that it was Stevie who was the victim of the bomb blast. Here, in the later version, Conrad inserts a whole chapter (X) of some fourteen pages dealing with the Assistant Commissioner and his exposé of Vladimir. The purpose of the insertion is, as Wright points out, "to keep the enlarged perspective." Conrad also enlarges Winnie's discovery, the close of Chapter IX, and the additions made here illustrate another important direction in the change from serial to novel: that is the careful delineation of atmosphere.

The section in the serial closes with one sentence: "She sat, her hands over her face and a torn evening paper lying in two dirty pink pieces at her feet." Apparently feeling that the sentence was too brief for its significance, Conrad adds approximately half a page of detail carefully emphasizing Winnie's mood. She is crushed by the discovery, is immobile in her grief, and it is important that the tone of the scene should coincide with and help express the exact state of her mind. A sentence is inserted just before the quoted one: "She sat at her post of duty behind the counter" (212). Inspector Heat, who has unknowingly revealed the tragedy to Winnie, passes her on his way out with "only a cursory glance," and "even the butterfly-shaped gas flames posed on the ends of the suspended T-bracket burned without a quiver" (212-13). The closing sentence is a symbolic statement of the collapse of Winnie's seemingly secure world:

In that shop of shady wares fitted with deal shelves painted a dull brown, which seemed to devour the sheen of the light, the gold circlet of the wedding ring on Mrs. Verloc's left hand glittered exceedingly with the untarnished glory of a piece from some splendid treasure of jewels, dropped in a dust bin. (213)

Probably no other novelist in English is so deeply concerned with the use and effect of atmosphere in fiction as is Conrad. From his earliest novels, in which the setting of mood sometimes becomes purple passages of lush rhetoric for its own sound and color, through

tò *Suspense*, the total feeling and mood of a scene is of vital importance in its effect. Conrad's preoccupation with atmosphere has led to his being called a "mood novelist"; in his novels, says David Daiches, sense impressions "are always carefully organized to produce the atmosphere which, for Conrad, is the essential quality of the experience."⁸ A careful study of mood and feeling in any of the novels will show that this is an oversimplification.

It is true that Conrad frequently runs riot with rich descriptions of background, particularly in the Malaysian novels; but even the exotic lushness of the jungle has more of an excuse for being than just itself. The famous storm scene in *An Outcast of the Islands*, in which Lingard confronts Willems with his guilt, is clearly over-described; however, the great richness of the storm is integrated with the feelings and psychological state of the humans silhouetted against it. The sense impressions are not the essential quality of the experience; they are essential to the total meaning of the experience, which was Conrad's constant aim. He wished to make us hear, to make us feel, and, before all, to make us see, but he wished to do so through art, which is "a single-minded attempt to render the highest kind of justice to the visible universe, by bringing to light the truth, manifold and one, underlying its every aspect." And the truth of art can come "only through complete, unswerving devotion to the perfect blending of form and substance."⁹

Some of the additions to *The Secret Agent* show Conrad's use of atmosphere to point up and strengthen the whole effect of a scene—to reach the totality of the experience—unusually well, since the novel with its maze of violence, police intrigue, and tawdry revolutionary society is hardly the most obvious vehicle for sensuous description for its own sake. Frequently there are inserted paragraphs and pages which expand a mood or clarify feelings which had previously been just vague suggestions.

Early in the book, after his fateful interview with Vladimir and the caricatured meeting of the anarchists, Verloc prepares to retire, feeling lonely and disconsolate at the plight of a secret agent being unwillingly forced into violence. To the sentence in the serial, "Mr. Verloc made an effort, finished undressing and got into bed," Conrad adds:

Down below in the quiet, narrow street measured footsteps approached the house, then died away, unhurried and firm, as if the passer-by had started to pace out all eternity, from gas-lamp to gas-lamp in a night without end; and the drowsy ticking of the old clock on the landing became distinctly audible in the bedroom. (57)

The added passage is important because it gives the reader Verloc's precise frame of mind at a crucial point in the book (one of the three paralleled interviews with Winnie), and it does so not with exposi-

⁸ *The Novel and the Modern World* (Chicago, 1947), p. 53.

⁹ Preface to *The Nigger of the Narcissus*, p. vii.

tion but with impressionistic description. The details are not haphazard "moods"; they are carefully selected sensory impressions which blend together a certain exact pattern of feeling. Another important function of the passage, and of many other similar ones, is its symbolical relationship to the whole novel: the ticking of the clock and eternity, so fundamental to the theme of time which threads through the book; the gas lamps which flare in every important scene with their artificial, corrupting light.

Ossipon's meeting with the remarkable Professor in Chapter IV closes with a clear and brutal foreshadowing of the climax of the novel. To Ossipon's question about his next move, the Professor answers, "Fasten yourself upon the woman for all she's worth." Conrad adds two paragraphs in the novel which are essentially atmospheric. Ossipon sits in the cafe stunned. Suddenly and without reason a mechanical piano breaks into a bizarre playing of "The Blue Bells of Scotland" and continues as the Professor walks up the stairs and out into the street. The sudden, harsh irony is strikingly close to the modern thriller effects of Alfred Hitchcock or Graham Greene: the shock that comes from the sudden intrusion of mundane reality. The last paragraph added to the chapter fixes the sordid and barren world of the Professor and Ossipon:

In front of the great doorway a dismal row of newspaper sellers standing clear of the pavement dealt out their wares from the gutter. It was a raw, gloomy day of the early spring; and the grimy sky, the mud of the streets, the rags of the dirty men harmonized excellently with the eruption of the damp, rubbishy sheets of paper soiled with printer's ink. . . . Ossipon looked hurriedly both ways before stepping out into the cross-currents, but the Professor was already out of sight. (79)

The only point in the novel at which Winnie makes any overt expression of love for her husband occurs just before her tragic discovery that Verloc is responsible for Stevie's death. The mood of the scene, in contrast to the later crushing grief, is calm, ironically domestic in a household strangely removed from commonplace domesticity. Winnie asks Verloc, "And you are not tired of me?" Conrad adds three sentences emphasizing the mood, broken only by the suggestion of the word "brooding." "Not a whisper reached them from the outside world. The sound of footsteps on the pavement died out in the discreet dimness of the shop. Only the gas-jets above the table went on purring equally in the brooding silence of the parlour" (195). Repeated are two of the most frequently used mood-details: the gas jets and the footsteps.

The most effective change from serial to novel is probably in Chapter XI, which relates Verloc's murder and the events leading to it. The murder is surely one of the most impressive treatments of violence in the modern novel. The chapter is the inevitable climax to which the entire novel has been leading. From a brief two and a half magazine pages in the serial, Conrad expands the scene to a thirty-

six page chapter of extremely intricate Jamesian psychological analysis, skillfully moving step by step to Winnie's murder of her husband. Most of the added material is concerned with Winnie's unmoving grief and frozen hysteria, Verloc's complete inability to understand her loss in Stevie, and his stumbling and elaborate attempts to justify his actions. The whole point of the end of the novel is redirected by a specific change made in the way in which Winnie is led to kill Verloc.

In the serial the murder is a result of accident: Winnie attempts to escape Verloc's affectionate and apologetic caress and in doing so reels against the table upon which the knife is lying. The knife falls, and Winnie "scrabbles" on the floor for it. She rises with the knife clenched in her fist. The actual murder is touched upon very briefly: "The last thing Mr. Verloc saw in life was the shadow of an arm on the wall. She struck. Accident has such accuracies. It was a most effective blow. Mr. Verloc exhaled a deep sigh of death."

In the novel the murder is fully intended, and the revision makes this quite clear by pointing to the act all along the way. There are seven separate added references to knives and stabbing through the chapter before the murder is presented.

Mrs. Verloc's wifely forethought had left the cold beef on the table with carving knife. . . . (231)

"I stood the risk of having a knife stuck into me any time these seven years." (238)

"I have no mind . . . to get a stab in the back." (248)

to escape the knife of infuriated revolutionists. (249)

cutting thick slices with the sharp carving knife. (253)

Laying down the carving knife, Mr. Verloc listened. (253)

She could scratch, kick, and bite—and stab too; but for stabbing she wanted a knife. (256)

And there is the ironic accuracy of Verloc's remark to Winnie, "Strike me dead if I ever would have thought of the lad for that purpose" (257).

Winnie is shocked into action, in the novel, when Verloc says with resignation, "I wish to goodness . . . I had never seen Greenwich Park or anything belonging to it." The name Greenwich sets up a series of associations in Winnie's mind: smashed branches, torn leaves, and Stevie blown to bits. She drops her immobility completely; "she felt herself to be in an almost preternaturally perfect control of every fibre of her body" (261). And when Verloc calls to her in a wooing tone—in this version—she comes to him, but with the knife she has skimmed from the table top in passing hidden in her hand. As she moves toward him, her face becomes a mirror of her brother's. Conrad then renders the action from Verloc's viewpoint. The result is a startling and effective impressionistic treatment of violence.

He was lying on his back and staring upwards. He saw partly on the ceiling and partly on the wall the moving shadow of an arm with a clenched hand holding a carving knife. It flickered up and down. Its movements were leisurely. They were leisurely enough for Mr. Verloc to recognize the limb and the weapon.

They were leisurely enough for him to take in the full meaning of the portent, and to taste the flavour of death rising in his gorge. His wife had gone raving mad—murdering mad. They were leisurely enough for the first paralyzing effect of this discovery to pass away before a resolute determination to come out victorious from the ghastly struggle with that armed lunatic. They were leisurely enough for Mr. Verloc to elaborate a plan of defence involving a dash behind the table, and the felling of the woman to the ground with a heavy wooden chair. But they were not leisurely enough to allow Mr. Verloc the time to move either hand or foot. The knife was already planted in his breast. (262-63)

The whole focus of the scene is shifted, from the author's omniscient point-by-point narration to a view through Verloc as he lies prone on the couch. The chilling wait is imaginary but real; the stoppage of time emphasizes the sudden rush as the knife descends, and the shadows and the creak of the plank are the concrete details which bring the scene back to reality. By funneling the action through Verloc, Conrad also gains objectivity; the author steps aside and allows the action to speak for itself—an important advantage of impressionism. This kind of shift—the tendency toward author effacement—is evident throughout *The Secret Agent* and is necessary because the novel rests solidly upon irony—objective irony.

The devices of focusing the moment of violent action through the mind of the protagonist and of using sharp irrelevant details and time lag were not new to Conrad. He used almost the identical kind of technique for the explosion of the *Judea* in *Youth*. Marlow, who narrates the action, is leaning on a bench engaged in trivial conversation with the ship's carpenter.

He remarked, "I think we have done very well, haven't we?" and then I perceived with annoyance the fool was trying to tilt the bench. I said curtly, "Don't, Chips," and immediately became aware of a queer sensation, of an absurd delusion,—I seemed somehow to be in the air. I heard all round me like a pent-up breath released—as if a thousand giants simultaneously had said Phoo!—and felt a dull concussion which made my ribs ache suddenly. No doubt about it—I was in the air, and my body was describing a short parabola. But short as it was, I had the time to think several thoughts in, as far as I can remember, the following order: "This can't be the carpenter—What is it?—Some accident—Submarine volcano?—Coals, gas!—By Jove! we are being blown up—Everybody's dead—I am falling into the after-hatch—I see fire in it." (22-23)

And it is interesting to find that Ford was using the same device twenty years after *The Secret Agent* in his *A Man Could Stand Up* (1926). The scene is considerably more polished, but the heart of Conrad's impressionism is there. Like Marlow, Tietjens, the hero of Ford's tetralogy, also experiences an explosion, here from a German barrage in the trenches during World War I.

He was looking at Aranjuez from a considerable height. He was enjoying a considerable view. Aranjuez's face had a rapt expression—like that of a man

composing poetry. Long dollops of liquid mud surrounded them in the air. Like black pancakes being tossed. He thought: "Thank God I did not write to her. We are being blown up!" The earth turned like a weary hippopotamus. It settled down slowly over the face of Lance-Corporal Duckett, who lay on his side, and went on in a slow wave.

It was slow, slow, slow . . . like a slowed-down movie. The earth manoeuvred for an infinite time. He remained suspended in space. As if he were suspended as he had wanted to be in front of the cockscomb in whitewash. Coincidence!

The earth sucked slowly and composedly at his feet.¹⁰

Ford's rendering is sharper, or at least more "impressionistic." Conrad gives both the protagonist's statement of the sensation—"aware of a queer sensation"—and the impression of the sensation: that is, he both renders and reports; whereas Ford depends more upon suggestive images and pure sensation: "black pancakes," "slowed-down movie." Ford does not tell us the way Tietjens felt, but makes it quite clear by implying the feeling through Tietjen's impressions.

Conrad was to discover later that this device was even more effective when the sense impressions were limited, confined to specific senses, because the material was naturally more sharply focused and thus more vivid. Joseph Warren Beach has pointed out that much of the effect of the terrible closing scene of *The Arrow of Gold* (1919), in which Rita carries on the strange conversation with her mad cousin and George listens in the darkened room, comes from the "physical limitation" caused by the overturned candelabrum;¹¹ the scene comes to us wholly through sound and touch—the screaming insane voice, Rita's face wet with tears—and we see it through George and his heightened psychological state.

In *Chance* (1914), when Powell sees through the cabin window the hands poisoning Captain Anthony's whiskey, the remarkable scene is limited by the small area of glass which frames it (416-17). The "old freckled hand" is sharply etched, as is the whole scene, by being framed by Powell's (and our) narrow but direct vision. Razumov in *Under Western Eyes* (1911) moves in a one-dimensional world without sound after Nikita brutally smashes his eardrums: "The lightning waved and darted around him in its silent flames, the water of the deluge fell, ran, leaped, drove—noiseless like the drift of mist" (369). The experiments of the French Symbolist poets with sound and color were a natural development of this impressionistic technique.

In Conrad's early novels the reader is often saturated by the great masses of sensory detail crowded into small areas of description, principally because the novelist used no real selection; nearly every possible appeal to the senses was rendered in as rich and brocaded a language as possible. It is only later that he learned the importance

¹⁰ *Parade's End* (New York, 1950), p. 637.

¹¹ *The Twentieth Century Novel* (New York, 1932), p. 347. Beach also quotes in full the scene from *Chance* which is discussed below.

of limitation. *The Secret Agent* is almost a mid-point in Conrad's development of impressionism, and this development is perhaps the most important single technical change evident in the revisions from serial to novel. The central tendency of all the changes is toward precision, toward more direct rendering through the implication of sensory detail, rather than telling through a point-by-point chronological narrative. *The Secret Agent*, serial to novel, gives us one of the clearest indications possible that Conrad was well aware of the potentials of literary impressionism.

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LECONTE DE LISLE'S ABORTIVE AMBITIONS
UNPUBLISHED CORRESPONDENCE

By IRVING PUTTER

Despite a seemingly widespread disparagement of the Sainte-Beuve critical method, much literary criticism sanely continues to take advantage of all relevant material concerning a writer's life to throw light on his work. The literature undeniably will stand or fall on its own merits, but the critic's legitimate curiosity about the circumstances surrounding its creation will doubtless continue to supply relatively objective data to assist in a general evaluation, when exaggerated reactions have spent themselves. It would seem difficult to gainsay the immense value which the abundant correspondence of Hugo and the equally abundant biographical information can have for critics of his poetry. And conversely, no one who has attempted to fathom the complexities of Leconte de Lisle's work can have failed to regret the extreme paucity of documentation and particularly of correspondence; of the major nineteenth-century poets in France, Leconte de Lisle is probably the most frustrating in this respect. Scattered letters and bits of information occasionally come to light, but it will be some time before a really satisfactory biography can be written. The following notes are intended to contribute to the slowly growing body of information concerning the Parnassian.

Particularly distressing is our ignorance of the fertile period immediately following the publication of *Poèmes Antiques* (1852), for in those years, Leconte de Lisle gradually moves away from the stylized Hellenic themes, explores the exotic and violent world of the barbarian races, allows himself to become increasingly personal in his expression, and fashions violent denunciations of contemporary degeneracy or of life itself, as well as some of the most notable nostalgic descriptions of his native island. We know in a general way¹ that what lay behind these developments was intense personal misery—a bitter disappointment in love, relative obscurity, and acute poverty. Certain remarks in Flaubert's letters to Louise Colet testify to the reality of the poet's suffering in his day-to-day struggle for physical survival. Apparently his only means of support were a correspondence with a newspaper in Bourbon Island, a small annual pension granted in 1853 by the Bourbon Colonial Council, and tutoring

¹ Jean Bonnerot has noticed the dearth of concrete material: "Ses biographes se sont montrés fort discrets sur la pauvreté cruelle qui le tortura pendant des années." *RHLF*, July-Sept., 1950, p. 321.

in Greek and Latin. "Je plains bien ce pauvre Leconte de sa leçon. . . . Mais on ne va au ciel que par le martyre," writes Flaubert,² and a little later he adds: "Je suis navré de ce que tu me dis de ce pauvre et excellent Delisle!"³

In 1853 the kindly Béranger interceded in the French Academy on behalf of the impecunious writer, pointing out that he was "dans un état voisin de l'indigence"; and Vigny, too, contributed his support in the same body in 1854 and 1856, so that several small prizes were granted to Leconte de Lisle. That he desperately needed this help is apparent from the fact that he was incapable of settling even inconsequential debts and had to postpone payment until he could receive the Academy funds.⁴ In his pressing appeal for a pension to help the poet, Villemain wrote in 1856: "Il est fort maigre et pâle, comme un homme qui n'a pas souffert seulement de chagrin. . . . Et le découragement est grand comme la souffrance. . . ." One recalls Baudelaire's endless peregrination from apartment to apartment when Leconte de Lisle tells his friend, Madame Colet: "J'ai été absent de chez moi pendant deux jours pour cause des scènes affreuses qui m'y sont faites!"⁵

Even as late as 1862,⁶ he is unable to pay his rent and is asked to vacate his quarters. "Comme je suis dans l'impossibilité la plus complète de payer mes deux derniers mois de loyer . . . , " he writes, "je vais me trouver de nouveau dans la position du fils de l'homme, sans une pierre où reposer ma tête." He is forced to plead for "une misérable pièce de cinq francs qui me donne le temps d'attendre quelques jours." His haughty pride receives some rude jolts in this period. "Accablé que je suis d'inquiétudes et d'angoisses de toutes les minutes, avec une femme désolée et malade de chagrin, il me faut bien mettre de côté toute réserve personnelle."

It is this resigned and realistic attitude which is so interesting in a poet whose work repeatedly displays intractable characters, willing to break but never bend. Various colleagues of Leconte de Lisle had made up their minds; no degree of despair would force them into the disheartening routine which would simplify their existence but bleed them of their moral and physical energies. If a Gautier or a Dierx were exceptions, such writers as Flaubert and Baudelaire immediately come to mind as spokesmen of a group of extremist romantics who obstinately refused to have any dealing with work other than their own creation and criticism. Flaubert could write, as his financial stresses grew increasingly acute:

² Sept. 30, 1853, to Louise Colet.

³ Dec. 28, 1853, to Louise Colet.

⁴ Cf. three notes published by Pierre Jobit, *Leconte de Lisle et le mirage de l'île natale* (Paris, 1951), pp. 113-15. Years later, the same debt problem still hounds him in his relations with his "infernal bottier," and he confesses: "Ma détresse est sans borne." *RHLF*, July-Sept., 1950, p. 323.

⁵ Cf. the letters published by Henri Guillemin in *Le Monde*, Aug. 4, 1955. The citation is from an undated letter, but is undoubtedly from the 1853-1854 period.

⁶ The date is probable rather than certain. *RHLF*, July-Sept., 1950, p. 323.

Quant à une place, à une fonction . . . jamais! jamais! jamais! . . . Et d'ailleurs, est-ce que je suis capable de remplir une place, quelle qu'elle soit? Dès le lendemain je me ferai flanquer à la porte pour insolence et insubordination. Le malheur ne me tourne pas à la souplesse, au contraire! Je suis, plus que jamais, d'un idéalisme frénétique et résolu à crever de faim et de rage plutôt que de faire la moindre concession.⁷

Such a letter could easily have been written by Leconte de Lisle; the intransigence, the fierce idealism, indeed the style, recall the correspondence of the author of *Les Montreurs*. Thus it is not surprising, after Leconte de Lisle had written to Louise Colet (January 24, 1853) of his "état voisin de la folie," brought on in part by "la pénurie d'argent qui me ronge," after he had mentioned (August 8, 1856) his "affreuses difficultés de la vie" to Vigny, that the latter should advise his young admirer, almost as Chateaubriand's Amélie had advised René: "Ce qu'il faudrait, monsieur, croyez-moi, ce serait un travail régulier" (November 24, 1856).

The fact is, however, that Leconte de Lisle did make serious efforts to find some means of subsistence less precarious than writing poetry. The passing remark to Louis Ménard (November 8, 1849), "Je donnerais beaucoup pour être certain du travail qu'on me promet," is enigmatic,⁸ but the formal petition sent to the Ministre de l'Instruction Publique in July, 1848, requesting a teaching position in Bourbon Island, and giving as references, among others, Auguste Comte and Béranger,⁹ bears all the earmarks of authenticity and sincerity. In 1859 he was even taking steps to find work as a proofreader, though this attempt, too, was to prove fruitless.¹⁰

It was, however, the teaching activity which kept attracting the poet, even as it had in his early youth, when he had spoken of founding a new school.¹¹ In his invitation to Leconte de Lisle to pay him a visit, Vigny observes: "Il me sera plus facile, en vous voyant, de

⁷ January, 1879, to Madame Brainne. Leconte de Lisle, too, had written, as early as 1839: "Je vais donc vivre de mon propre travail, ce qui me paraît peu probable, cependant, car je ne suis bon à rien, si ce n'est à réunir des rimes simples ou croisées, lequel travail n'a pas cours sur la place." *Premières poésies et lettres intimes* (Paris, 1902), pp. 197-98.

⁸ M. and A. Leblond, *Leconte de Lisle* (Paris, 1906), p. 245.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 249.

¹⁰ RHLF, July-Sept., 1950, p. 322.

¹¹ *Premières poésies et lettres intimes*, p. 172. The pedagogical tendency need be no more surprising in Leconte de Lisle than in Mallarmé. The studied nature of a large proportion of his poetry stems from a mind which, though doubtless not truly erudite like that of Louis Ménard, at least aspires to erudition and "la vie contemplative et savante." Allusions in the 1852 preface repeatedly suggest the essentially pedagogical effect of true poetry. "O Poètes, éducateurs des âmes," writes the would-be theorist, ironically, because modern poets no longer fulfill their hereditary function. Unlike the spontaneous creation of primitive man, poetry today "n'est plus apte à enseigner l'homme," for the creators now are moralists lacking common principles and philosophers with no doctrine. "Instituteurs du genre humain . . .," he continues in the same derisive vein, "qu'enseigneriez-vous"; the teacher has become more ignorant than the disciple, and can no longer guide him in the quest for his ideal traditions. That Leconte de Lisle's conception of the poet as pedagogue was different, more austere, and less immediate than Hugo's need hardly be added. "(Le) didactisme rimé"

savoir vos projets, et si c'est sans retour que vous a manqué cette sorte d'Ecole polytechnique en pays étranger."¹² The school referred to had just been established at Zurich, and several unpublished letters still in its files bear witness to the seriousness with which Leconte de Lisle pursued his hope of teaching French literature, as well as the high esteem which he enjoyed in important circles at a time when official criticism was still hostile. One letter, dated February 26, 1855, is signed by Victor Cousin, and seems to indicate that Leconte de Lisle was also making efforts to teach in France, and could have availed himself of one offer, which may not have been sufficiently attractive in remuneration or location.

Je me plais à certifier ici, comme membre de l'Académie Française, qu'en plusieurs occasions, l'Académie a distingué et honoré Monsieur Leconte de Lisle. Nous avons tous été frappés des beaux vers que renferme son recueil de poésies, et Monsieur le Secrétaire Perpétuel, dans son Rapport public, en a parlé de la plus flatteuse manière. Je ne puis rien ajouter à l'autorité d'un juge tel que Monsieur Villemain, mais je me permets de relever dans le talent de Monsieur de Lisle une qualité qui le recommande particulièrement dans la circonstance présente, je veux dire une connaissance intime de la littérature grecque et latine. Une telle connaissance est d'un grand prix dans l'enseignement. Je ne suis donc pas surpris que Monsieur le Ministre de l'Instruction publique ait offert une chaire à Monsieur de Lisle, et je suis persuadé que l'Ecole Polytechnique de Zurich pourra se féliciter d'avoir confié l'enseignement de la littérature française à un poète français très distingué et nourri de l'étude de l'antiquité.

Victor Cousin.

A la Sorbonne, 26 Février 1855.

The second, bearing the same date, was sent by the aged Béranger not long before his death; it again testifies to the repeated efforts of the popular *chansonnier* to help the struggling poet, whose published criticism a decade later was to repay him in such an equivocal manner.¹³

Monsieur,

Je suis très honoré de la confiance que vous voulez bien m'accorder. Je m'en réjouis même, car elle peut être utile à un jeune homme rempli d'un véritable talent et qui distingue un noble caractère.

Vous n'ignorez sans doute pas, Monsieur, que je suis loin d'être un savant. Ce n'est donc pas par moi-même que je puis apprécier les études sérieuses de Leconte de Lisle. Mais j'ai de doces amis qui m'ont assuré ces études sérieuses et tous se plaisent à rendre justice à ses connaissances en linguistique et en his-

was for him, no less than romantic sentimentality, a "négation absolue de toute poésie." *Discours de réception*; cf. his denunciation of the "tentation déplorable" of didacticism in the introductory remarks of the essay on Auguste Barbier, 1864.

¹² *Le Monde*, Aug. 4, 1955.

¹³ Cf. Leconte de Lisle's article on Béranger (published Aug. 13, 1864, in *Le Nain Jaune* now appended to *Derniers Poèmes*), in which he qualifies his subject as an "esprit médiocre, rusé sans finesse, malicieux sans verve et sans gaieté, sous le couvert d'une sorte de bonhomie sentimentale," a man who has never thought, dreamed, or had any notion of true art. All this may be accurate enough; yet, gratitude might have suggested something more than a passing—almost grudging—allusion to Béranger's "virtus domestiques."

toire littéraire. La lecture de ses poèmes, Monsieur, suffira je pense pour vous en fournir des preuves.

Un témoignage éminent, celui du Secrétaire perpétuel de l'Académie française, peut du reste, à cet égard, Monsieur, lever tous vos doutes. Dans un rapport fait en séance publique, il a parlé de Leconte de Lisle d'une façon qui doit rassurer la conscience de ceux de vos collègues qui hésiteraient à lui confier la chaire du collège supérieur que vous allez fonder. M. Villemain en eût même bien autrement parlé, si le genre du prix décerné le lui eût permis.

Vous voyez, Monsieur, que j'en appelle toujours à d'autres pour vous attester le mérite littéraire de mon jeune ami. Il n'en est pas ainsi pour ses qualités personnelles, dont je me porte caution, sûr qu'il se montrera digne du rang où vous pouvez le placer. Il s'est tiré trop noblement d'assez rudes épreuves pour que je ne m'empresse pas de vous le recommander. La douceur de son caractère saura, je l'espère, lui concilier et ses juges et ses collègues, si vous parvenez à l'enlever à la France, ce que dans son intérêt je suis réduit à souhaiter.

En vous remerciant, Monsieur, d'avoir bien voulu vous adresser à moi dans cette occasion, je vous prie d'agrérer l'assurance de ma plus parfaite considération.

Votre très dévoué serviteur
Béranger

Paris. 26 Février 1855

Mon adresse en cas de besoin: 5, Rue de Vendôme, au Marais.

Apparently, then, there was some serious interest in Switzerland, since the authorities of the school had taken the trouble to write to Béranger, after Leconte de Lisle had given his name as a reference. How assiduously they felt the poet—whose character was actually far less gentle than Béranger supposed, and whose academic credentials were lamentably weak¹⁴—would carry out his duties, we may only surmise. The matter dragged out over the months, and toward the end of the year, Leconte de Lisle was obliged to write personally to see if he could not bring about a favorable decision.

Paris, 24 Novembre 1855

Monsieur,

Ayant appris indirectement que la chaire de littérature française à l'Ecole Polytechnique de Zurich était encore vacante, et même que le choix d'un professeur était encore douteux, je viens vous prier de vouloir bien avoir l'obligeance de me tirer à cet égard de ma longue inquiétude, en m'apprenant si ma candidature offre toujours quelque chance de réussite.

Je vous prie, Monsieur, d'excuser mon importunité et d'agrérer l'assurance de ma considération respectueuse.

Leconte de Lisle

Paris—119, Rue de Vaugirard,
chez M. Jobbé Duval.

The refusal was not long in coming, and Leconte de Lisle terminates the affair with characteristic abruptness.

Paris, 10 Décembre 1855.

Monsieur,

Je renonce d'autant plus positivement à ce que vous voulez bien nommer ma

¹⁴ Cf. L. Tiercelin, *Bretons de lettres* (Paris, 1905), pp. 29-39, 83, 92, 105-11, 129-30. After the academic fiasco in Brittany from 1838-1842, there was no further formal education. In 1864 the poet was even to write contemptuously of the illusory influence of the pedagogue: "Les impuissants seuls professent au lieu de créer." Essay on Barbier, 1864, now appended to *Derniers Poèmes*.

candidature à la chaire de littérature française à l'Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale que la réponse singulière dont vous m'avez honoré semble m'y engager.

Je reste, Monsieur, sous le coup d'un étonnement que je ne puis vous dissimuler. L'autorité des noms illustres qui m'avaient prêté leur appui moral et littéraire m'avait paru un sûr garant de réussite. Je me suis trompé; qu'il n'en soit plus question.

Veuillez agréer, Monsieur, mes salutations empressées.

Leconte de Lisle

Many years later, when continuous creation and unyielding attitudes had made of Leconte de Lisle the most revered living poet in France, save Hugo of course, we find him engaged in an even more curious effort. Leconte de Lisle was unquestionably sensitive to official honors and recognition. Twice he had presented himself as a candidate for the French Academy (1873, 1877), only to be rejected in favor of Père Gratry and Victorien Sardou. On the second occasion, he had consoled himself by writing to Hugo, whose vote alone had gone to Leconte de Lisle: "Vous m'avez nommé, je suis élu,"¹⁵ and he requested Vacquerie to publish his defiant rejoinder to the Academy's snub. After this, he refused categorically to appear before the Academy, but he allowed himself to be persuaded, after the death of Hugo, to accept the latter's seat. And so, after calling the Academicians "ces vieux gredins couverts de crimes" (1853)¹⁶ and the Academy "une vraie boîte de conserves" (1882), he was elected to that august body, with no competition, on February 11, 1886. But the following letter, hitherto unpublished,¹⁷ shows that he had certainly not abandoned hope of receiving the official consecration. He had plainly decided to wait until the honor could be achieved with no risk of humiliation.¹⁸ Indeed, he had even thought seriously of a still more official position. If Hugo could be a *Pair de France*, why should Leconte de Lisle not be a Senator, were it only as official representative of his remote native island? The proud poet even went so far as to confer with one of the ministers to discuss the possibilities, but this project too was doomed to failure.

Paris, 19 Mars 1882

Chère Madame et chère amie,

Je vous remercie de tout cœur de votre affectueuse lettre et de la peine si obligeante que vous vous êtes donnée d'écrire à Bourbon au sujet de cette candidature sénatoriale avortée dans le présent et fort aventureux dans l'avenir. J'ai

¹⁵ RHLF, April-June, 1956, p. 242.

¹⁶ Leblond, p. 390.

¹⁷ From the collection of Jean Pozzi, for whom Madame Leconte de Lisle served as godmother. I am indebted to M. Rolland Boris for drawing my attention to this letter.

¹⁸ Cf. his letter to Heredia in 1885: "L'élection est fort problématique, et . . . je me serai ennuyé, fatigué et même un peu humilié en pure perte." M. Ibrovac, *José-Maria de Heredia* (Paris, 1923), p. 145. One thinks of Flaubert's sharply contrasting attitude: "Quand on est quelqu'un pourquoi vouloir être quelque chose?" (June 13, 1878, to Princesse Mathilde). Nor was the latter's sovereign scorn of the Academy, "institution pourrie et bête" (Feb. 8, 1852, to Louise Colet), ever belied by his actions.

rénoncé à la poser officiellement à la suite d'une longue conversation avec de Mahy, député de La Réunion et ministre actuel de l'Agriculture. . . . De Mahy a conclu en m'affirmant qu'il m'était fort dévoué, et je ne doute pas en effet que son dévouement me soit acquis, toutes les fois qu'il n'aura pas l'occasion de me le prouver.

Je ne serai donc pas Sénateur de La Réunion. Cette singulière ambition sénile qui ne m'est pas venue naturellement comme bien vous pensez, mais qui m'a été suggérée est ainsi réprimée dès le premier moment. . . . Quant à l'Académie, c'est la même histoire. . . . Matériellement ce serait une élection qui me serait fort utile et ce n'est que sous ce rapport qu'elle est désirable; car au point de vue littéraire, rien n'est plus insignifiant ni plus inutile. Mais jamais les Académiciens actuels ne me pardonneront ma lettre à Victor Hugo. Il me faut attendre la mort d'une vingtaine d'immortels au moins, ce qui peut être fort long malgré les 78 ou 80 ans de beaucoup d'entre eux. Ce sont des gaillards très entêtés, outre que l'Académie est une vraie boîte de conserves. . . .

Alberte nous a en effet annoncé le mariage d'Emilie à laquelle nous souhaitons bien affectueusement tout le bonheur qui lui est dû après tant de chagrin cruel et immérités.

A bientôt, chère Madame. Anna vous embrasse de tout cœur, vous, Emilie et Paule.

Votre vieil ami dévoué
Leconte de Lisle.

His correspondent was Madame Hippolyte Fouque, a creole from Leconte de Lisle's island, who had stirred the poet's heart and who, it has been said, inspired *Les Roses d'Ispahan*. As for the young woman whose marriage is mentioned at the end of the letter, she was one of the three daughters of Madame Fouque, and was soon to kindle in the aging (nearing seventy) poet an even brighter flame than her mother. For her Leconte de Lisle would almost pathetically collect an album of verses, perform feats of riding and swimming,¹⁹ and even become a tutor in literary exercises so that she might find a teaching post following her short-lived marriage. Though the pedagogical interest now was placed at the service of more intimate feelings, the hoped-for Héloïse idyll was destined to be no less abortive than Leconte de Lisle's aspirations to a niche in the professorial and senatorial worlds.

University of California, Berkeley

¹⁹ Jean Dornis, *Essai sur Leconte de Lisle* (Paris, 1909), p. 6. Dornis mentions no name, but the young woman was unquestionably Emilie Fouque.

THE MANUSCRIPTS OF LAURENT DE PREMIERFAIT'S WORKS

By PATRICIA M. GATHERCOLE*

During the fifteenth century Laurent de Premierfait, a "clerc" of the diocese of Troyes, translated leading classical and Italian works into French, thus becoming the first to present to lay readers in France a knowledge of Boccaccio and Cicero. His translations consist of Cicero's *De senectute* in 1405, *De amicitia* in 1416, Aristotle's *Economics* in 1418, and possibly Seneca's *De quatuor virtutibus*.¹ As well as translating the classics, Laurent rendered into French Giovanni Boccaccio's *De casibus virorum illustrium* in 1400 and again in 1409, the *Decameron* through a Latin translation of Antonio of Arezzo between 1411 and 1414, and possibly also *De claris mulieribus*.² Many manuscripts of these translations are extant in various European libraries, with a concentration in France; the vast number of copies available today bears witness to the popularity of Laurent's renditions. These manuscripts were often beautifully illustrated, containing from 100 to 150 miniatures,³ and were owned by numerous royal personages.⁴

Little research has been done in recent years regarding the manuscripts of Laurent's translations. Books, even from an earlier date, dealing with Laurent's works in general or with their traditional sources, have merely touched upon the subject. H. Hauvette in his

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¹ See G. S. Purkis, "Laurent de Premierfait," *Italian Studies*, IV (1949), 33. Although the details of his life are hidden in obscurity, it is generally agreed that Laurent was born in 1380 in Premierfait, a village near Troyes in Champagne. He served as secretary to a cardinal, spent some time at the Papal Court of Avignon, and translated didactic works for members of the French nobility. He is said to have died in 1418. See Henri Hauvette, *De Laurentio de Primofato* (Paris, 1903).

² It is indeed questionable whether Laurent translated Boccaccio's *De claris mulieribus*. See below.

³ *Des cas des nobles hommes et femmes* (*De casibus*), in particular, lent itself to interesting and elaborate illustration. I hope to publish soon "The Miniatures on the MSS of Laurent de Premierfait's Works."

⁴ Laurent made his translations for such illustrious patrons as Jean, Duke of Berry, and Louis de Bourbon. Fine manuscripts of *Des cas* were in the possession of the last dukes of the House of Burgundy, from Jean sans Peur to Charles le Téméraire, of Henry VII of England, and other royal families. See Henry Bergen, ed., *Lydgate's Fall of Princes*, EETS, e.s., Nos. 121-124 (1924-27), I, 14.

published thesis, *De Laurentio de Primofato* (Paris, 1903), mentions extant manuscripts while discussing Laurent's life and the content of his translations. George Sarton, in *Introduction to the History of Science* (Baltimore, 1948), Vol. III, cites several of these manuscripts but supplies little detail. Further information may be obtained from such works as Paulin Paris, *Les Manuscrits françois de la Bibliothèque du Roi* (Paris, 1836); A. Hortis, *Studi sulle opere latine del Boccaccio* (Trieste, 1879); and L. Delisle, *Le Cabinet des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Impériale* (Paris, 1868-81). A few articles give additional facts: G. S. Purkis, "Laurent de Premierfait," *Italian Studies*, IV (1949); F. Smith, "Laurent de Premierfait's French Version of the 'De casibus,'" *RLC*, XIV (1934), 516; and my own "Manuscripts of Laurent de Premierfait's 'Du cas des nobles,'" *Italica*, XXXII (March, 1955). These studies, however, mention only some manuscripts that comprise one or two of Laurent's translations. In this article I hope to present a more complete picture of the manuscript collections for all of Laurent's works.

Laurent's translation of *De senectute*, which was dedicated to Louis, Duke of Bourbon,⁵ is extant in twenty manuscripts, found in various European libraries. The largest collection is at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, which shows Nos. fr. 126, 1009, 1020, 1187, 9186, 24284, 24285, and nouv. acq. 6220. The majority of the manuscripts are on vellum and date from the fifteenth century.⁶ *De vieillesse* begins with Laurent's prologue discussing his translation, includes his interpretation of Cicero's prologue, and finally his rendition of the text itself. Since the treatise is short, it usually forms part of a collection of brief pieces bound together in one volume, decorated by colored capitals, scroll work in the margins, and by a few miniatures. Among the manuscript copies at the Bibliothèque Nationale, in fr. 126 (beginning of fifteenth century, miniatures, decorated letters), *De vieillesse* commences on folio 121, forming the second part; in fr. 1009 (no miniatures), it constitutes the third section, beginning on folio 85; in fr. 1020, it is part two; in fr. 1187, the second section on folio 55; in fr. 9186 (one large miniature, 332 folios) at folio 312; on fr. 24285 (paper, 266 folios) at folio 227.

The manuscripts containing Laurent's version of *De senectute* are occasionally mutilated: fr. 24284 (paper, 48 folios, 285/210 mll.) has several sheets torn out. The Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal in Paris possesses one copy: No. 2672 (193 folios, whose last folio is damaged, 302/205 mll., decorated capitals; *De vieillesse* appears on folio 155).⁷ Other manuscripts of this translation are found in French libraries

⁵ Louis was the son of Isabelle de France, sister of Philippe de Valois.

⁶ Unless otherwise stated, the manuscripts of *De vieillesse* mentioned in the following paragraph are from the fifteenth century and written on vellum.

⁷ Jean Barrois, in *Bibliothèque Prototypographique ou Librairies des fils du Roy Jean* (Paris, 1830), notes these copies of *De vieillesse* in the "Librairies de Bourgogne": Nos. 1005, 1018, 1953 (mentioned on pp. 157, 159, 278 respectively).

outside Paris: in the Musée Condé at Chantilly, No. 281(896), dating from the sixteenth century and containing 73 folios on paper with decorated letters, and No. 282(491) that shows *De vieillesse* having 249 folios and three beautiful miniatures, with Laurent's work beginning on folio 213 (see *Catalogue général des mss. des bibliothèques publiques de France* [Paris, 1897]); No. 368 (134 folios, dating from the sixteenth century) at St. Omer also includes Laurent's translation.

There are two manuscripts in Switzerland: one at Bern, No. 246 (folios 56-138), and another at Geneva, Bibliothèque de la Ville de Genève, fr. 79 (folios 479-512, second half of the fifteenth century, 526 folios in all, 310/207 mll., seven paintings; see *Catalogue Codicum Bernensium* [Bern, 1925]; and *Notice sur les mss. Pétau conservés à la Bibliothèque de Genève*, by H. Aubert [Paris, 1911]). Belgium has a similar number of manuscripts: the Musée Plantin Moretus at Antwerp shows fr. 181 (174 folios, 2 miniatures, decorated capitals), with *De vieillesse* commencing on folio 62 (see *Musée Plantin Moretus, Catalogue des mss.*, by J. Denucé [Anvers, 1927]); the Royal Library in Brussels has No. 11127 (beginning of fifteenth century, miniatures; see *Catalogue des mss. de la Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique des Ducs de Bourgogne* [Bruxelles, 1842]). In the collection of the British Museum, London, are Add. MS 17,433, and Harleian MSS 4917 (illuminations) and 4329 (part 2, paintings, transcribed by Pieux le Fevre). Russia possessed a late fifteenth-century copy of *De vieillesse* in manuscript form at the Library of St. Petersburg: No. I D (109 folios, three miniatures; see *Catalogue des mss. fr. de la Bibliothèque de St. Petersbourg* [Paris, 1924]).⁸

Shortly after translating *De senectute*, Laurent rendered the Ciceronian dialogue *De amicitia* into French and again dedicated his work to Louis, Duke of Bourbon. Like *De vieillesse*, *De la vraye amitié* is generally found in fifteenth-century manuscripts executed on vellum,⁹ containing decorated letters, handsome scroll work, and a small amount of miniature painting. Since the essay is brief, it is often to be discovered bound along with other compositions in one manuscript, frequently with *De vieillesse*.

Only twelve manuscript copies are extant in different parts of the world. The Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris boasts the most extensive collection: fr. 126 (commencing on folio 153, miniatures); fr. 1020 (folio 44, miniatures); fr. 20016 (no miniatures); fr. 24283 (paper, 135 folios, 285/200 mll.); and nouv. acq. 6220 (folio 16). A manuscript copy of *Laelium* in French is also found combined with

⁸ Several early printed editions exist which were taken from the various manuscripts. One of the earliest was published by Denys at Paris in 1540. See J. Brunet, *Manuel du Librairie*, II (Paris, 1810), 51. An English rendition taken from the French done by the Count of Worcester was among the early books printed by William Caxton in England. See J. Brunet, II, 63.

⁹ All manuscripts of *De la vraye amitié* cited here may be concluded to be on vellum and from the fifteenth century, unless otherwise noted.

Dè vieillesse at St. Omer, No. 368; in Belgium, Musée Plantin Moretus, Antwerp, No. 181; in England at the British Museum, Harleian MSS Nos. 4329 (third part) and 4917;¹⁰ in Russia, as part 3 of MS I D in the Library of St. Petersburg; and in the Vatican Library, Rome, Reg. 918. There is a copy in the United States at the Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore, Maryland, No. 505 (dated about 1470, containing 97 folios, with one large miniature; see S. de Ricci and W. J. Wilson, *Census of Medieval and Renaissance MSS in the U.S. and Canada* [New York, 1935], 3 vols.).

Aristotle's *Economics*, which Laurent had translated from a Latin version in 1418, may be considered a rare manuscript since only six copies are preserved. Like Laurent's two preceding works, it generally forms part of a group of manuscripts executed on vellum, dating from the fifteenth century and brought together in one volume. Under the title "Yconomiques, c'est de gouverner hostel et mesnaige," it is included in the vast quantity of copies at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris: fr. 1085 (with two miniatures); fr. 24283 (part 2, beginning on folio 96; the manuscript contains, in addition, Laurent's *De la vraye amitié*); fr. 1020 (part 4, beginning on folio 93; the manuscript includes *De vieillesse* and *De la vraye amitié* of Laurent). At the Musée Condé in Chantilly, No. 278(575), with 11 miniatures on 195 folios, 345/250 mll., shows Aristotle's *Ethics* translated by Nicole Oresme and on folio 183, *Yconomiques* done by Laurent, which is primarily a redoing of Oresme's translation (BN fr. 204), according to some critics (see *Chantilly: Le Cabinet des Livres, Musée Condé*, I [Paris, 1911], 220). A manuscript of the *Yconomiques*, recently identified by A. D. Menut as being by Laurent, is found in Rouen at the Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 927 (see *Romance Philology*, IV [1951], 55-62). The manuscript collection of *Yconomiques* is completed by No. 28099 (now Bodl. MS 965^a) in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, with 308 leaves written about 1420, that embody as part 2, commencing on folio 291, Laurent's treatise.¹¹

A French version of Seneca's *De quatuor virtutibus*¹² has been attributed by a few scholars to Laurent and by others to Jehan Courtecuisse or to a contemporary.¹³ The French translation, in any case,

¹⁰ *De amicitia* was translated into English by the Count of Worcester and edited by Caxton.

¹¹ The first part (folio 5) of this manuscript contains a French translation of Aristotle's *Éthics*, with the notation: "This is probably by Laurent de Pre-mierfait." See F. Madan, *Summary Catalogue of Western MSS in the Bodleian Library at Oxford*, V (Oxford, 1905), 409.

¹² It is an anonymous treatise of the fourth century that has been attributed to Seneca. At one time it had been assigned to Martin de Braga, a Portuguese bishop of the sixth century.

¹³ Paulin Paris, *Les Manuscrits françois* (Paris, 1836), II, 121. L. Delisle, *Le Cabinet des manuscrits*, I (Paris, 1868), 60, and H. Hauvette, p. 19, support the claim of Courtecuisse, Bishop of Paris, 1421-23. E. Koeppl, in *Laurent de Premierfaits und Johs Lydgates Bearbeitungen von Boccaccios De casibus* (Munich, 1903), states that Laurent was the translator. G. S. Purkis also attributes the translation to Laurent.

is generally conceded to have been composed about 1403 and dedicated to the Duke of Berry, who possessed one of the finest manuscript libraries of the time. Fifteen manuscripts have been handed down to us, executed in the fifteenth century on vellum, like the majority of the remainder of Laurent's manuscripts.

The nucleus of the collection of manuscripts of *Des quatre vertus* is kept at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, with one manuscript there assigned to Laurent and three others to Jehan Courtecuisse: fr. 1091 (on paper and attributed to Laurent); fr. 9186 (beginning on folio 304, one miniature, assigned to Jehan Courtecuisse); fr. 581 (part 2, beginning on folio 253, no miniatures, bearing the name of Courtecuisse); fr. 1020 (part 5, folio 122, Courtecuisse). Another manuscript at the Bibliothèque Nationale, fr. 190, gives the translator's name as Jehan Troussseau and the date as 1372. French copies of this same manuscript are included in collections at other libraries of France: at the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Paris, No. 5767, assigned to Courtecuisse; No. 152 at Lille, which mentions Laurent as the author; No. 282(491), part 3, in the Musée Condé at Chantilly, which gives Courtecuisse as the translator.

Switzerland, Belgium, England, and Russia also possess copies of *Des quatre vertus*. Among the manuscripts at the Bibliothèque de Genève, one finds fr. 79 (part 4, folios 512-525) which is ascribed to Courtecuisse (see H. Aubert, *Notices sur les mss Petau* [Paris, 1911], p. 95). The manuscript catalogue of the Royal Library in Brussels (*Catalogue des mss de la Bibliothèque Royale des Ducs de Bourgogne* [Bruxelles, 1842]), mentions two manuscripts, both bearing the name of Laurent: No. 9359 (dating from the first third of the fifteenth century and having miniatures), and No. 9560 (same date, no miniatures). The manuscript assigned to Laurent is also found in the British Museum: Add. MS 19,900 and Royal 20 A XII (end of fifteenth century, one miniature); and Harleian MS 4329 (part 1, with illuminations, but mutilated, dated 1460, that is said to have had Laurent as translator).¹⁴ The St. Petersbourg Library in Russia had a copy of "Des Quatre vertus principaux,"¹⁵ which the catalogue states was written by Laurent. It is included with Laurent's translations of *De senectute* and *De amicitia* in MS I D (part 1, three miniatures; see *Catalogue des mss. français de la Bibliothèque de St. Petersbourg* [Paris, 1924], p. 93).

Laurent's translations of some of Boccaccio's works also proved to be extremely popular. There are extant approximately sixty-five

¹⁴ See *Catalogue of Harleian Manuscripts*, III (London, 1810), 136.

¹⁵ The work was frequently printed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It was printed in Vérard's edition of Orosius (Paris, 1491?), without attribution, and with a preface addressed to Charles VIII. "Les œuvres de Senecque translateez de latin en françois par maistre Laurens de Premierfait," printed by Vérard (1500?) also includes a translation, but with a preface addressed to the Dukes of Berry and Orléans. According to J. Brunet, II, 51, *Des quatre vertus* was dedicated to Tanneguy du Chastel, who lived at the end of the fifteenth century, so the translator could not have been Laurent.

manuscripts of Laurent's two translations of Boccaccio's *De casibus virorum illustrium*, also dedicated to the Duke of Berry. Most manuscripts are of the second translation; each forms the sole item in its volume, written on 300 to 400 vellum folios. Exquisite miniatures, together with decorated capital letters and scroll work, adorn nearly all the manuscripts; illuminations which figure at the beginning of each of the nine books of *Des cas* are the most elaborate. Although the date of execution is rarely mentioned, the language of the manuscripts clearly indicates that they were done in the fifteenth or early sixteenth centuries. Twenty-two copies, all "fonds français," are at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris: fr. 226, 131, 16994, 127, 233 and 234 (2 vols.), 227, 128, 130, 132, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 235 and 236 (2 vols.), 237, 238, 597, 1121, 16995, 20086, 24289.¹⁶

Most manuscripts of *Des cas* are extant in other French libraries. The Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal in Paris has four of these manuscripts, all dating from the fifteenth century: Nos. 5191, 5192, 5193 (a beautifully decorated manuscript; see H. Martin, *Le Boccace de Jean sans Peur* [Bruxelles, 1911]), and 5281 (Books VI-IX only). At the Bibliothèque Mazarine in Paris there are three fifteenth-century manuscripts, two of the second version, Nos. 3878 and 3879, and one dated 1431, No. 3880, composed of extracts made by a certain "Jehan Lamelin." Two manuscripts are located at the Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève in Paris: Nos. 1128 and 1129 (first version). Additional manuscripts of *Des cas* found in other parts of France are No. 63 at the Bibliothèque de Bergues, No. 686 at the Bibliothèque de Cambrai, No. 662 at the Bibliothèque de Carpentras, No. 1440 at the Bibliothèque de Rouen, Nos. 857, 858, 859 (first translation), and 860 at the Musée Condé, Chantilly.

Of the remaining extant manuscripts, two are in Austria (s.n. 12,766 and 2560 in the National Library, Vienna); four are in Germany: one incomplete manuscript is in the Dresden Library; two volumes, 95 and 96, in the Jena Library; a late copy, dated 1572, at the Library of Wolfenbüttel; and codex gallicus 369 at the Staatsbibliothek Munich (with miniatures by Jean Fouquet); two in Switzerland (Bibliothèque Publique de Genève, Nos. 190 and 191); twelve in Great Britain; and six in the United States.

The collection of the British Museum comprises Royal MSS: 20 C IV, 18 D VII, 14 E V; Add. MSS 18,750, 35,321, 11,696, and Harleian 621 (these last two of the first translation). In the Bodleian Library at Oxford is No. 2465, and in the Hunterian Museum at the University of Glasgow are Nos. 371 and 372, in addition to a defective copy, No. 208. Among the collections of manuscripts (imperfect for the most part) in the United States are HM 936 and 937 at the Huntington Library, San Marino, California; No. 8 at

¹⁶ For further information on these and other manuscripts of *Des cas*, see my article, "The Manuscripts of Laurent de Premierfait's 'Du cas des nobles,'" *Italica*, XXXII (March, 1955), 14.

the Library of Lucius Wilmerding in New York; Nos. 342 and 343 at the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York; Nos. 517 and 518 at the Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore; No. 290 (a fragment of one folio) in the Free Library of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Laurent's translation of the *Decameron* was also copied and recopied on parchment by various scribes throughout the fifteenth century. Since Laurent knew no Italian, he had enlisted the services of Antonio of Arezzo to make a translation first into Latin. His French translation he dedicated to the Duke of Berry, although it was written in the house of Bureau de Dampmartin, a rich bourgeois of Paris. The manuscripts, like those of *Des cas*, are from 300 to 400 folios in length, often adorned with ornate letters and numerous miniatures to illustrate the text.

The number of extant manuscripts of the *Decameron* remains comparatively small, however; approximately fifteen are in Europe today. The Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris has a treasured collection: fr. 129¹⁷ (contains a dedicatory epistle to the Duke of Berry); fr. 239 (346 folios, dating from the beginning of the fifteenth century); fr. 240 (with one carelessly done miniature); fr. 1122 (no miniatures); fr. 12421 (452 folios, manuscripts formerly belonged to Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester). The Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal in Paris has a finely illustrated fifteenth-century copy of *Cent Nouvelles*, No. 5070 (395 folios, with 100 miniatures, formerly in the library of the Dukes of Burgundy),¹⁸ written by the scribe Guillebert de Mets. A manuscript copy, No. 4, is in the Haute-Vienne Library at Limoges; it constitutes a fifteenth-century fragment of 44 folios, consisting of the end of the first day, the entire second day, and the beginning of the third (see *Catalogue général des mss des bibliothèques publiques de France* [Paris, 1897]).¹⁹

London's British Museum²⁰ has two examples of *Cent Nouvelles* in manuscript form: Add. MSS 35,322 (I, days 1-5) and 35,323 (II, days 6-10), both dating from the late fifteenth century; also from the same period comes BM Roy. 19 E I, on 463 folios, with one large miniature, executed at Bruges for Edward IV (see *British Museum Catalogue of Western MSS in the Old Royal and King's Collections*, by G. Warner and J. Gilson [London, 1921]). The Bodleian Library at Oxford shows No. 21787 (now MS Douce 213) of Laurent's *Decameron*, executed on paper, dating from the middle of the fifteenth century (see G. S. Purkis, "A Bodleian *Decameron*," *MÆ*, XIX [1950], 67).

¹⁷ Jean Barrois mentions (p. 185) the following copies of *Cent Nouvelles*: Nos. 1260, 1261, 1262, and 1714 (p. 245).

¹⁸ P. Paris notes No. 6798^a (of *Cent Nouvelles*) by Laurent, dating from the beginning of the fifteenth century.

¹⁹ See also *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes*, LXXI (1910), 64.

²⁰ In London there is also a copy at the Sotheby House (Maison Sotheby, Vente Clumber 934). See B. Woledge, *Bibliographie des Romans et Nouvelles en prose française antérieure à 1500* (Geneva, 1934), p. 79.

²¹ For information about a lost manuscript, see *Romania*, XIII (1884), 475.

Italy, Austria, and Holland became the proud possessors of copies. A manuscript of *Cent Nouvelles* is extant in the Palatine Library of the Vatican at Rome, Palatinus lat. 1989 (with 100 miniatures and dated 1415-20). Other manuscripts are found at Vienna, No. 2561, coming from the fifteenth century, and in the Bibliothèque Royale at the Hague in Holland, No. 133 A5.²²

The French translation of Boccaccio's *De claris mulieribus*, finished in 1401, has been assigned by critics to various authors. P. Paris (I, 259) and G. Gröber (p. 1106) consider Laurent the translator of *Des cleres et nobles femmes*; H. Hauvette (pp. 102-105) and A. Hortis (p. 612) affirm that this authorship is questionable. In manuscript catalogues the translation varies in its attribution: in the *Catalogue générale des mss français*, by H. Omont, II (Paris, 1896), Laurent is given as the translator; yet in G. F. Warner and J. P. Gilson, *Catalogue of Royal and Kings MSS in the British Museum*, II (1921), 208, we read that the French translation is assigned to him without sufficient grounds. In my opinion, the translation is not the work of Laurent: it is so literal and badly done, in a style on the whole quite different from that of Laurent's other works, even from his first early translation of *De casibus*.

Yet, since *Des cleres* has been attributed by some to Laurent, we shall enumerate here the number of manuscripts (about eleven) that are available today. The manuscripts are again on vellum and from the fifteenth century. Like those of *Des cas*, being close in subject matter and lending themselves easily to illustration because of their multiple stories of famous people, they frequently have masterful paintings. The Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris shows six lavishly decorated copies: fr. 598 (from the beginning of the fifteenth century, 100 miniatures on 161 folios, from the library of the Duke of Berry); fr. 599 (end of the fifteenth century, 94 folios, done for Louise de Savoie); fr. 12420 (167 folios, with a miniature at the beginning of each chapter); fr. 1120 (148 folios); fr. 133 (end of the fifteenth century, 111 folios, belonged to the seigneur de la Gruthuyse); fr. 5037 (paper, 305 folios, beginning on folio 223).²³ Among the manuscripts at the Musée Condé, Chantilly, is No. 856(622) of *Des cleres*, a delicately painted copy, bound along with "Le Livre de la cité des dames," by Christine de Pisan (*Des cleres* starts on folio 31 of 130 folios).

The Royal Library of Brussels also has a copy of *De claris* in French, No. 9509 (164 folios), which was formerly in the library of the Dukes of Burgundy; the National Library in Vienna owns No. 2555 of *Des cleres*, which belonged to Tanneguy du Chastel. Similar

²² For information on incunabula editions of *Cent Nouvelles*, see Zambrini and Bacchi della Lega, *Le edizioni delle opere di G. Boccaccio*, Il Propugnatore (Bologna, 1875), Part I, p. 428. *Cent Nouvelles* was first published by Vérard in 1485, again by him in 1500-03, and by six others in the sixteenth century.

²³ It was published in Paris by A. Vérard in 1493, by Jehan-André in 1537, and by G. Rouville at Lyon in 1551.

copies from the early fifteenth century with beautiful miniatures are found in the British Museum: Royal 16 G V (129 folios, lacking chapters IX and X) and Royal 20 C V (168 folios).

If the vast number of Laurent's works and their beauty of execution are taken into consideration, we may conclude that they were highly esteemed during the late Middle Ages. Most copies, with miniatures and scroll work, date from the fifteenth century. Since they were written in a language which often varies from one manuscript to another, it is difficult to assign any of them to a particular linguistic area of France. Scribes, for the most part anonymous, exercised, on the whole, considerable care in making these copies. Folios are rarely missing, and, in general, the manuscripts are well preserved.

The popularity of individual works depended on their didactic purpose and possibilities for rich illustration. Laurent's translation of *De casibus* was perhaps the most sought after, since it is extant today in approximately sixty-five manuscripts containing fine miniatures. *De vieillesse* was second, with twenty manuscripts preserved; *Cent Nouvelles*, *De la vraye amitié*, and *Des quatre vertus* are a close third, with approximately fifteen manuscripts each; *Des cleres*, with eleven manuscripts, follows; and finally the *Yconomiques*, with only six. The total number of manuscripts reaches the high figure of 146, if we include the translations attributed to Laurent (119, without *Des quatre vertus* and *Des cleres*).

The manuscripts were in the possession of noble families in France and England, so that the majority of manuscripts remain today in those two countries, the most abundant collection being kept at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. Yet it is interesting to note that still other widely scattered libraries have acquired copies: there are manuscripts in Germany, Belgium, Italy, Monaco, Russia, Austria, and the United States. To round out one's knowledge of fifteenth-century painting and to learn facts about late medieval French architecture, costume, and customs, one has only to study the miniatures on Laurent's manuscripts and the additions to the translations themselves. The manuscripts are among the richest collection that the medieval period has produced and deserve to be recognized and known by the literary historian, the student of medieval painting, and the paleographer.

Roanoke College

REVIEWS

The Correspondence of Arthur Hugh Clough. Edited by FREDERICK L. MULHAUSER. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1957. Two volumes. Pp. xxiii + 656. \$16.80.

Arthur Hugh Clough came up to Oxford from Rugby, where he had been one of Arnold's finest pupils. He came with the faith and the simplicity of a devout believer who saw no evil that could not be explained in terms of ultimate good. At this time he wrote of an aunt of his "who has lost 7 children out of 13, as a person who has 7 children already secure in Heaven." From this naive faith he moved slowly but steadily into the religious ferment so effectively stirred up by Newman.

Clough's letters do not reveal the step by step development of his thoughts on these subjects; slowly the reader becomes aware that Clough is taking a stand not only against Newman, but against the fixed dogmas of the Church of England. Newman's triumph was great. He led many devout young men to Rome, but it is now quite clear that he also stimulated the critical thinking that drove many of England's most brilliant young men to a philosophy of skeptical agnosticism. If not one of the most intellectual, Clough was certainly one of the most courageous of these young men.

He gave up his life at Oxford, which embodied everything he loved and everything he was qualified to do, because he could not subscribe to the Thirty-Nine Articles. His letters to Provost Hawkins and Hawkins' letters to him reveal the intensity of his struggle. Obedience to the dogmas of the church was an absolute for which there was no substitute as far as the Provost was concerned. He admired Clough; he pleaded with him to seek spiritual guidance so that he might once more accept complete subscription. Intellectual ability, high moral principle, kindness, generosity, unquestioned scholarly attainments, great capacity as a tutor—these were admitted qualities of Clough's character; but they weighed as nothing in the scale when balanced against the dogmas of the church.

Clough could not subscribe to the Articles; he could no longer believe in the virgin birth, nor could he accept any miracle as having historical validity. He accepted "Redemption as an idea, but not as an historical event." He held that "a man may . . . have all that is important in Christianity even if he does not so much as know that Jesus of Nazareth existed."

These letters of Clough mark the road that most of the leaders in literature, philosophy, and science traveled in the late nineteenth century. Here the steps taken and the consequences that followed are revealed in an intimate and moving account. Clough was forced to resign. He taught for a time at the University of London, but again he was asked to resign. He came to America, hoping that under the good influence of his friend Emerson he could make a new beginning. He needed a new start and additional income because he was engaged to be married and the young lady's "Papa" would not consent to the marriage until the young man had an income of £600 a year. Clough's prospects seemed doubtful in America. Through the aid of friends, and with some help from "Papa," he managed to reach the required income two years after his return to England. He then was married, became the father of two children, and died at the age of forty-two.

These few bare facts were already known to scholars before this present edition of the letters appeared. The unique contribution made by Frederick Mulhauser is that he includes letters to Clough from his friends. Here is a collection of letters that does not leave the reader wondering, unsatisfied, and at times deeply irritated because he would like to know what X answered to the provocative letter from Y. Of the 573 letters in this collection a little more than one-fourth are replies from Clough's friends—and a list of his friends reads like a catalogue of the most prominent literary figures of England and America in the last half of the nineteenth century.

The whole collection is so skillfully arranged that not only does one get a deep insight into the intellectual life of Clough and his age, but one is led from letter to letter by a sense of dramatic intensity sometimes equal to the development of a good biography. The letters cover the life of Clough from the age of ten to his death. The necessary epilogue to an impressive life story is not omitted. The last letter in the collection is from the widow to her husband's closest friend in America. It is a restrained account of Clough's death, a beautifully executed and deeply moving letter.

S. K. WINTHROP

University of Washington

Critical Moments: Kenneth Burke's Categories and Critiques. By GEORGE KNOX.
Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1957. Pp. xxiii + 131. \$3.50.

By general consent, Kenneth Burke is the most versatile, resourceful, inclusive, of contemporary critics. He is an exceptionally sensitive reader of the literary text who also brings to bear on it an unusually wide knowledge not only of history, philosophy, and aesthetics, but also of psychology, anthropology, sociology, linguistics, and semantics. His admirers may, therefore, have mixed emotions about George Knox's study of his work. In an age when "explication" of the text has become the rage, it appears that the foremost explicator in turn needs to be explicated. This may be regarded as a tribute to the depth and richness of his thought—just as philosophers are still busy expounding Kant and Hegel. But it is still a doubtful compliment. Literary critics are generally expected to be more lucid than German philosophers; and Hegel might remind us that difficulty in understanding an author is not always due to his profundity.

I write mournfully out of my own experience with Burke, and I know on behalf of many other admirers. In his early works—*Counter-Statement*, *Permanence and Change*, and *Attitudes toward History*—he was the most suggestive of critics. At the end of a book readers might be uncertain just where he had arrived, or how he had got there, but the journey was wonderfully stimulating. As Stanley Hyman has observed, he threw off in parentheses and footnotes enough suggestions for investigation to keep a flotilla of critics busy for a lifetime. But with *A Grammar of Motives* and *A Rhetoric of Motives* (eventually to be followed by a *Symbolic*) Burke took off into a world of his own where it has become increasingly difficult to follow him, and the effort to do so has seemed increasingly unprofitable. Many have bogged down and given up the effort. It is hard to locate or define the trouble; Burke does not seem arty, priestly, or pretentious. The effect, at any rate, is of a man going round and round in circles that somehow lack both center and circumference, spinning about himself an intricate verbal web that seems destined to become a cocoon.

He still throws off acute observations, but chiefly he exudes tortured, fine-spun analyses that do not encompass the text and may obscure its plainest meanings.

George Knox recognizes the trouble. He is a perceptive, shrewd, and lively student of Burke, warmly sympathetic but not simply reverential. He remarks the baffling elaborations, the "high-level obfuscations," the overcomplicated analyses that can oversimplify emotional meanings, the frequent effect of anesthetizing rather than heightening sensitivity to the text. Unfortunately, he does not succeed in making Burke fully accessible to the uninitiated or the wearied. They may find his explication of the later works almost as hard going as the works themselves. He does not overcome the difficulty he mentions, of explaining Burke's terminology without using it. In his own person he often sounds like Burke.

Still, this is by no means a deplorable way to sound. At his best Burke writes a pungent prose; one might keep struggling with his later works merely for the sake of the many apt, witty statements. Knox at least provides helpful introduction to an impressive body of criticism, specifying the major themes and major developments, and making a strong enough case for his thesis: "Burke is worth the struggle." The wearied may still honor Burke's lifelong effort to be the "complete" critic or, in his own words, "to use all that there is to use." They can dream that once he has finished *A Symbolic of Motives*—completed his lexicographical web—he might emerge from the cocoon, return to the public world of letters, and put to livelier or more relaxed uses a mind as keen as any of our time.

HERBERT J. MULLER

Indiana University

The Poetic Style of Erich Kästner. By JOHN WINKELMAN. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Studies, New Series, No. 17, 1957. Pp. 53. \$1.00.

Previous critics, John Winkelman says, have described the ideas and the sociological content of Erich Kästner's poetry but have neglected the "esthetic realization of this content." The purpose of Winkelman's investigation is to fill the gap, to examine the form of Kästner's poems, and to define his style by means of detailed analysis. The present monograph is a supplement to his *Social Criticism in the Early Works of Erich Kästner* (1953) and an addition to the general critical discussion of Kästner's production.

The salient feature of Kästner's style is described at the outset as a union of two "esthetically heterogeneous elements": a satirical or, to use a term of style rather than content, "rhetorical" external form and a hidden lyrical quality. These are held together in a state of tension, and this tension is considered to be the distinguishing mark of a Kästner poem. The major portion of the study then attempts to document the occurrence and interplay of these two elements.

Winkelman is at his best when discussing the "rhetorical" side of the poet's art, the stylistic techniques aimed at the direct communication of ideas. Kästner's training as a journalist, the social crises of the era in which he wrote most of his poems, and above all his desire to teach through satire led him away from all *poésie pure* toward a style which is narrative, clear, forceful, and ironically didactic. His use of everyday language and his search for words with a single obvious meaning; his completely unmusical verse structure and his reliance on a few regular metric patterns; the satiric function of his rimes; his use of imagery for the purpose of pedagogical illustration—these are cited as evidences

that the communication of a message, not lyrical expression as such, is the primary concern of Kästner's poetry. Winkelman's belief that Kästner builds his poems on the model of the newspaper item is interestingly and convincingly developed. Ample illustration is provided for the devices and principles listed, though I should have liked to see more instances of the "detailed analysis" promised in the introduction and included, for example, for the poem "Jahrgang 1899" (p. 20).

If all the obvious aspects of form serve "rhetoric" in this poetry, where is its lyricism? When he turns to this question, Winkelman seems to be on less firm ground. The answer is eventually given, but to find it the reader must puzzle through needlessly confusing terminology (the distinction between "outer form" and "inner form," if indeed tenable, confuses more than it clarifies) and a needlessly complicated description of a fairly simple phenomenon. In a typical poem Kästner generally treats some prosaic, everyday experience behind which unspoken, everyday tragedy lies; he relates this experience with journalistic and often sarcastic straightforwardness; and the reader becomes aware of a disparity between the real emotional significance of the experience and the flippant way it is described. This disparity, I presume, is the tension Winkelman speaks of; and he calls the poetry "lyrical" to the degree that its incongruity challenges an emotional response from the reader. Thus the lyricism of Kästner's best poem, "Sachliche Romanze," lies not in the matter-of-fact experience itself and certainly not in the matter-of-fact form in which it is told, but in the forceful and ironic way this presentation calls the reader's attention to the human tragedy behind the seemingly casual breakup of an eight-year love affair.

Although one cannot agree that tension is the more or less exclusive property of Kästner, Winkelman is correct in citing it as the distinctive feature of Kästner's style; and he is right in showing that Kästner's development has been toward greater lyricism. It is a pity that more space was not devoted to the recent collection, *Die dreizehn Monate* (1956), which in its lack of social satire its use of more traditional lyrical motifs and imagery, its rhythmic variety, and its light musicality is so different from Kästner's earlier poetry as to necessitate some modification of what has been called characteristic of his style.

CHARLES W. HOFFMANN

University of California, Los Angeles

Ortega y Gasset: An Outline of His Philosophy. By JOSÉ FERRATER MORA. New Haven: Yale University Studies in Modern European Literature and Thought, 1957. Pp. 69. \$2.50.

About José Ortega y Gasset's being a central figure in the culture of contemporary Spain, there is little doubt. Ortega has not only influenced Spain intellectually, socially, and politically by acquainting her with vital currents of European thought, but he has also become one of the most lucid spokesmen of the crises which confront Western Europe: *España invertebrada*, 1921 (Spanish national crisis), *La rebelión de las masas*, 1930 (European social crisis), *La deshumanización del arte*, 1925 (crisis in modern art), *El tema de nuestro tiempo*, 1923 (the supreme crisis of a loss of faith in God and in human reason). But about Ortega's being one of Europe's principal philosophers, there is much doubt and no agreement.

José Ferrater Mora seems to have taken upon himself the task which Julián Marías has assumed in Spain: the defense of Ortega the philosopher. Ferrater begins with the assumption that Ortega does have a unique philosophy, although its system is an "open" rather than a "closed" one. The aim of Ferrater's study is to present "brief and somewhat sketchy," a "by no means exhaustive account" of this philosophy to the non-Spanish-speaking reader. Ferrater recognizes the thorny problems confronting him, and his approach is therefore marked by extreme caution. He indulges in neither bickering nor applause, but tries to keep close to the spirit of the famous apothegm: Neither bewail nor rejoice, but understand. Let understanding rather than criticism be our first concern here.

In outlining Ortega's thought, Ferrater uses Ortega's own "biographical" method: an arrangement of the facts not in mere chronological order, but according as they form a systematic structure of "philosophy" which permeates the 3,500 odd pages of Ortega's complete works. Ferrater's outline is structured on three stages of Ortega's intellectual development.

(1) Objectivism (1902-1914): the initial phase in which Ortega places an emphasis on "intelectualización" and "deshumanización," on things and ideas rather than on people, only gradually changing the emphasis to ideas that are "vital."

(2) Perspectivism (1914-1923): the famous Ortegan theory of circumstances ("yo soy yo y mis circunstancias"); notions of concepts and of perspectives in whose development Ortega leads through the dispute between rationalism and relativism, between pure reason and pure vitality, between idealism and materialism to his now well-known solution in which reason emerges as the supreme form and function of human life. Neither Socratic, Cartesian, Kantian, nor Hegelian, reason emerges as "razón existencial," vital reason.

(3) Ratio-vitalism (1924-1955): in this third phase of Ortega's intellectual growth Ferrater finds a formal presentation of the Spaniard's "philosophy," of which he examines four basic concepts: (a) the concept of vital reason—basic principle of *Cogito quia vivo* rather than Descartes' *Cogito ergo sum*; distinctions between ideas and beliefs; man's historical sense; (b) the doctrine of man—an analysis of the central issue in Ortega's thought: the problem of the basic reality, human life; life as a *faciendum*, rather than a *factum*; life as a *quehacer*, a thing to be made; life as drama, a liberation toward self; (c) the doctrine of society; and finally (d) the idea of philosophy—a philosophy of philosophy; distinctions between thinking and knowledge or cognition.

Granting Ferrater's limited aims and the nature of the reader to whom his study is directed, the results are admirable. The various phases of Ortega's intellectual development stand sharp and clear. The typically Ortegan topics sparkle in all their brilliance. But the work's defects cannot be overlooked, albeit they are contingent upon its aims. This reader had the feeling that at times he was walking through Ortega's thought with stilts. The study is always too noncommittal; Ferrater seems always too careful, too willing neither to bewail nor to rejoice, but merely to understand. The study is too brief for so complex a subject (conspicuously absent is any consideration of Ortega's aesthetics, which certainly must have a place in the ultimate analysis of his "philosophy"). In true Ortegan fashion it leaves the central, basic issues truncated and unresolved. What are the relationships between Ortega and Heidegger (the existentialists), and between Ortega and Husserl (the phenomenologists)? Is Ortega primarily a philosopher with a unique philosophy? Until the forthcoming

posthumous works appear (*El hombre y la gente, La idea de principio y Leibniz, ¿Qué es filosofía?*), such questions must remain unanswered.

It is undisputed that Ortega is a brilliant essayist who always stunningly expresses his many ideas on sociology and history of culture with an attitude that is philosophically oriented. But rather than do what amounts to obscuring these basic facts—insisting on Ortega the philosopher—this reader would prefer to approach Ortega from a different perspective: Ortega the vital thinker who uniquely analyzes the problems facing contemporary Spain and Western Europe, Ortega the brilliant essayist.

E. CORDEL McDONALD

University of Washington

Ecclesiale, by Alexander of Villa-Dei. Edited by L. R. LIND. With Introduction, Notes, and English Translation. Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1958. Pp. x + 155. \$4.00.

Alexander of Villa-Dei (Ville-Dieu; born ca. 1170) wrote Latin verse that is sheer agony to read; he is in fact the medieval equivalent of poor, relentless Sir Topaz McGonigle. He was a man of tolerable learning and vast industry, a teacher of theology and logic who did as much as any man to frustrate the Renaissance of the twelfth century. His hostility to the humanists of Orléans is notorious, and, if it needed proof, a glance at the notes here provided would suffice: Alexander cites or refers to not one single classical author. Nothing, in fact, could demonstrate more convincingly the essentially vocational character of medieval education than Alexander's writings. And his victory was complete—his versified grammar, the *Doctrinale*, which aimed only at the quickest of quick results ("This is all I know, and all ye need to know"), held undisputed sway until the humanistic Renaissance; even then there were 267 printed editions of the work between 1465 and 1588.

Here we have a brief introduction on Alexander's life and works and the history of the form to which the *Ecclesiale* belongs (the *computus*, or liturgical calendar). The 2,002 lines of text, reproduced from the unique manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale, are followed by a succinct commentary, an *apparatus criticus* containing the scribe's marginal glosses and the editor's emendations, a *calendarium perpetuum* with Alexander's data entered upon it, a bibliography of sixty-six items, and indexes.

The introduction is heavily factual and heavily documented, in the manner of a doctoral dissertation; the translation is accurate and makes no pretensions to style (why should it?); the commentary is sensible, but disfigured by the pointless comment on line 45 (where the text is correct and there is no need for the editor to hesitate about *not* emending) and, at line 576, by elaborate references to not one but two German grammars, in order to explain a quite ordinary sort of genitive: of the two classes of readers this book will attract, the one will not need and the other will not desire such instruction; there is at least one really bad misprint (*Testamentum Veterum*, p. 154). Of forty emendations twenty-seven are corrections of scribal misspellings. By far the best part of the commentary is the stream of concise information on details of liturgy and hagiology and such notes as that on line 716 (the reckoning of Easter).

My own interest in Alexander is almost nil. But even one whose field is the Neo-Latin poetry of the Italian Renaissance must admit that the *Ecclesiastical Doctrinal*, like the *Doctrinal*, is a work of major historical importance. L. R. Lind has performed a valuable service by making it available for the first time in useful form to students of medieval literature and history.

W. LEONARD GRANT

University of British Columbia

Maurras jusqu'à l'Action Française. By LEON S. ROUDIEZ. Paris: Éditions André Bonne, 1957. Pp. 336. Frs. 780.

Maurras loved literature to the point that he fought a duel for Anatole France because the latter, although holding different political convictions, loved and honored literature. It is regrettable that Léon Roudiez is of another mind, as he admits in his dedication; that is, he is *only temporarily* reconciled with literature.

The scope of Roudiez' book, which was presented in an earlier version as a thesis at Columbia University, is clearly delimited in a material sense. The introduction informs the reader that only those texts of Maurras bearing on the latter's formative years (1885-1899) have been studied. There is a wealth of such material, and the author extracts his texts from little known and no longer read publications. That erudite part is very commendable, and, thanks to the abundant direct quotations, the result is a living portrait. We see Maurras as a headstrong boy and young man, steeped in the folklore of his Provence and soon open to the beauties of esoterism, a Maurras who was more interested in the melancholy stroll of Peer Gynt in the forest of the Possibles than in sociology, economics, or even history (of which, writes Roudiez, Maurras had only a scanty knowledge) and who was possessed with some aloofness, if not hostility, toward Christian beliefs.

Yet that living portrait of Maurras is somewhat blurred, partly because Roudiez does not elaborate much on his quotations. "Ce qui nous préoccupe, c'est la formation de la pensée, de sa doctrine," the introduction reads. The formation of Maurras' thought might have been described more clearly had the religious background been outlined in a sharper light. Roudiez, adopting the view of Aldous Huxley and Maurras that the God of Pascal was that of Death, not of Life, might have presented that thesis more as an opinion rather than as a generally held belief (p. 83). He speaks of the "myths" of the Church (p. 107), whereas there would seem to be more advantage in using the term "religion" for Judeo-Christian beliefs.

Roudiez informs us that Renan and abbé Penon, a pious and very intelligent priest, both exerted a strong influence on the young Maurras, an influence which continued active throughout the latter's life. Roudiez states that probably there exists a voluminous correspondence between Maurras and Penon, but, if so, traces of such correspondence have been lost since 1944. It is to be hoped that it will be retrieved, because Maurras, who wrote in *Anthinea* that the most important fact of history was that the Athenians, so versatile and passionate, placed reason as the main deity on their altars, also began his *Ultima Verba* with these words: "Seigneur, endormez-moi dans votre paix certaine, 'Entre les bras de l'espérance et de l'amour.' "

This study is not merely a work of erudition. It offers the pleasant ring of conversations heard by Roudiez—for instance, on the relations between Maurras

and Anatole France before and after the "affaire Dreyfus." The chapters dealing with Maurras as a literary critic and a poet are the best part of the book. Here is the young critic who, before the formation of his rather set literary canons (that is, about 1890), greeted new talent quickly and spontaneously: de Nerval, Barrès, Gide, Valéry (p. 184).

This reviewer agrees with Roudiez that an objective understanding of Maurras is necessary for a fuller comprehension of the literary and intellectual history of the last hundred years. I would add "and history of political ideas," because the doctrine, not the thought, of Maurras continues the trend of the atheists of the right—Rivarol and Comte. Those, much more than the atheists of the left, considered the state apart from theology: theirs was a "purifying atheism." The historian who undertakes that work would be well advised to consult the present volume.

JEAN DAVID

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BOOKS RECEIVED

AMERICAN

Asselineau, Roger (editor). Edgar Poe: *Choix de Contes*. Traduction de Charles Baudelaire. Introduction et notes, suivi d'un *Conte Grotesque* et d'un *Essai sur l'art du conte*, traduits et annotés par Roger Asselineau. Paris: Aubier, Éditions Montaigne, Collection Bilingue des Classiques Étrangers, 1958. Pp. 354.

Howard, Leon. Herman Melville: A Biography. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, second printing, 1958. Pp. xi + 354. \$1.95.

Mahoney, Mother M. Denis. *Clarel: An Investigation of Spiritual Crisis*. An abstract of a dissertation. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1958. Pp. vii + 23. \$0.50.

Moore, Merrill. Poems of American Life. With an Introduction by Louis Untermeyer. New York: Philosophical Library, 1958. Pp. 275. \$4.00.

Pack, Robert. Wallace Stevens: An Approach to His Poetry and Thought. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1958. Pp. xvi + 203. \$4.50.

Whicher, Stephen E. (editor). Selections from Ralph Waldo Emerson. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, Riverside Editions A 13, 1957. Pp. xxiv + 517. \$1.15.

ENGLISH

Allen, Don Cameron (editor). Studies in Honor of T. W. Baldwin. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1958. Pp. 276. \$5.00.

Bowers, Fredson (editor). Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker. Vol. III: The Roaring Girl; If This Be Not a Good Play, The Devil Is in It; Troia-Nova Triumphans; Match Me in London; The Virgin Martyr; The Witch of Edmonton; The Wonder of a Kingdom. Cambridge: At the University Press, 1958. Pp. 649. \$10.50.

Buckler, William E. Matthew Arnold's Books: *Toward a Publishing Diary*. Genève: Librairie E. Droz; Paris: Librairie Minard, 1958. Pp. 182. Fr. s. 12.-.

Carnegie Institute of Technology. Shakespeare: Lectures on Five Plays, by the Members of the Department of English. Pittsburgh: Carnegie Institute of Technology, Series in English, No. 4, 1958. Pp. 83. \$1.00.

Carter, John (editor). Sir Thomas Browne: Urne Buriall and The Garden of Cyrus. Cambridge: At the University Press, 1958. Pp. viii + 120. \$2.50.

Crandall, Norma. *Emily Brontë: A Psychological Portrait*. Rindge, N.H.: Richard R. Smith, Publisher, 1957. Pp. 160. \$3.00.

Fink, Z. S. (editor). *The Early Wordsworthian Milieu: A Notebook of Christopher Wordsworth, with a few entries by William Wordsworth*. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1958. Pp. ix + 156. \$4.00.

Kermode, Frank. *Romantic Image*. New York: Macmillan Company, 1957. Pp. xi + 171. \$3.75.

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